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THE

WORKS

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

A NEW EDITION

IN TWELVE VOLUMES.

WITH

AN ESSAY ON HIS LIFE AND GENIUS,

BY ARTHUR MURPHY, ESQ.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

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THE

RAMBLER.

NUMB. 1. TUESDAY, *March* 20, 1749–50.

Cur tamen hoc libeat potius decurrere campo,
Per quem magnus equos Auruncæ flexit alumnus,
Si vacat, et placidi rationem admittitis, edam. JUV.

Why to expatiate in this beaten field,
Why arms, oft us'd in vain, I mean to wield;
If time permit, and candour will attend,
Some satisfaction this essay may lend. ELPHINSTON.

THE difficulty of the first address on any new occasion, is felt by every man in his transactions with the world, and confessed by the settled and regular forms of salutation which necessity has introduced into all languages. Judgment was wearied with the perplexity of being forced upon choice, where there was no motive to preference; and it was found convenient that some easy method of introduction should be established, which, if it wanted the allurement of novelty, might enjoy the security of prescription.

Perhaps few authors have presented themselves before the publick, without wishing that such ceremonial modes of entrance had been anciently esta-

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blished, as might have freed them from those dangers which the desire of pleasing is certain to produce, and precluded the vain expedients of softening censure by apologies, or rousing attention by abruptness.

The epick writers have found the proemial part of the poem such an addition to their undertaking, that they have almost unanimously adopted the first lines of Homer, and the reader needs only be informed of the subject, to know in what manner the poem will begin.

But this solemn repetition is hitherto the peculiar distinction of heroick poetry; it has never been legally extended to the lower orders of literature, but seems to be considered as an hereditary privilege, to be enjoyed only by those who claim it from their alliance to the genius of Homer.

The rules which the injudicious use of this prerogative suggested to Horace, may indeed be applied to the direction of candidates for inferior fame; it may be proper for all to remember, that they ought not to raise expectation which it is not in their power to satisfy, and that it is more pleasing to see smoke brightening into flame, than flame sinking into smoke.

This precept has been long received, both from regard to the authority of Horace, and its conformity to the general opinion of the world; yet there have been always some, that thought it no deviation from modesty to recommend their own labours, and imagined themselves entitled by indisputable merit to an exemption from general restraints, and

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to elevations not allowed in common life. They, perhaps, believed, that when, like Thucydides, they bequeathed to mankind κτημα ἐς ἀεὶ, *an estate for ever*, it was an additional favour to inform them of its value.

It may, indeed, be no less dangerous to claim, on certain occasions, too little than too much. There is something captivating in spirit and intrepidity, to which we often yield, as to a resistless power; nor can he reasonably expect the confidence of others, who too apparently distrusts himself.

Plutarch, in his enumeration of the various occasions on which a man may without just offence proclaim his own excellencies, has omitted the case of an author entering the world; unless it may be comprehended under his general position, that a man may lawfully praise himself for those qualities which cannot be known but from his own mouth; as when he is among strangers, and can have no opportunity of an actual exertion of his powers. That the case of an author is parallel will scarcely be granted, because he necessarily discovers the degree of his merit to his judges, when he appears at his trial. But it should be remembered, that unless his judges are inclined to favour him, they will hardly be persuaded to hear the cause.

In love, the state which fills the heart with a degree of solicitude next that of an author, it has been held a maxim, that success is most easily obtained by indirect and unperceived approaches; he who too soon professes himself a lover, raises obstacles to his own wishes, and those whom disappointments

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have taught experience, endeavour to conceal their passion till they believe their mistress wishes for the discovery. The same method, if it were practicable to writers, would save many complaints of the severity of the age, and the caprices of criticism. If a man could glide imperceptibly into the favour of the publick, and only proclaim his pretensions to literary honours when he is sure of not being rejected, he might commence author with better hopes, as his failings might escape contempt, though he shall never attain much regard.

But since the world supposes every man that writes, ambitious of applause, as some ladies have taught themselves to believe that every man intends love, who expresses civility, the miscarriage of any endeavour in learning raises an unbounded contempt, indulged by most minds without scruple, as an honest triumph over unjust claims, and exorbitant expectations. The artifices of those who put themselves in this hazardous state, have therefore been multiplied in proportion to their fear as well as their ambition; and are to be looked upon with more indulgence, as they are incited at once by the two great movers of the human mind, the desire of good, and the fear of evil. For who can wonder that, allured on one side, and frightened on the other, some should endeavour to gain favour by bribing the judge with an appearance of respect which they do not feel, to excite compassion by confessing weakness of which they are not convinced; and others to attract regard by a shew of openness and magnanimity, by a daring profes-

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sion of their own deserts, and a publick challenge of honours and rewards?

The ostentatious and haughty display of themselves has been the usual refuge of diurnal writers, in vindication of whose practice it may be said, that what it wants in prudence is supplied by sincerity, and who at least may plead, that if their boasts deceive any into the perusal of their performances, they defraud them of but little time.

Quid enim? Concurritur—horæ
Momento cita mors venit, aut victoria læta.

The battle join, and in a moment's flight,
Death, or a joyful conquest, ends the fight. FRANCIS.

The question concerning the merit of the day is soon decided, and we are not condemned to toil through half a folio, to be convinced that the writer has broke his promise.

It is one among many reasons for which I purpose to endeavour the entertainment of my countrymen by a short essay on Tuesday and Saturday, that I hope not much to tire those whom I shall not happen to please; and if I am not commended for the beauty of my works, to be at least pardoned for their brevity. But whether my expectations are most fixed on pardon or praise, I think it not necessary to discover; for having accurately weighed the reasons for arrogance and submission, I find them so nearly equiponderant, that my impatience to try the event of my first performance will not suffer me to attend any longer the trepidations of the balance.

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There are, indeed, many conveniencies almost peculiar to this method of publication, which may naturally flatter the author, whether he be confident or timorous. The man to whom the extent of his knowledge, or the sprightliness of his imagination, has, in his own opinion, already secured the praises of the world, willingly takes that way of displaying his abilities which will soonest give him an opportunity of hearing the voice of fame; it heightens his alacrity to think in how many places he shall hear what he is now writing, read with ecstacies to-morrow. He will often please himself with reflecting, that the author of a large treatise must proceed with anxiety, lest, before the completion of his work, the attention of the publick may have changed its object; but that he who is confined to no single topick, may follow the national taste through all its variations, and catch the *aura popularis*, the gale of favour, from what point soever it shall blow.

Nor is the prospect less likely to ease the doubts of the cautious, and the terrors of the fearful, for to such the shortness of every single paper is a powerful encouragement. He that questions his abilities to arrange the dissimilar parts of an extensive plan, or fears to be lost in a complicated system, may yet hope to adjust a few pages without perplexity; and if, when he turns over the repositories of his memory, he finds his collection too small for a volume, he may yet have enough to furnish out an essay. He that would fear to lay out too much time upon an experiment of which

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he knows not the event, persuades himself that a few days will shew him what he is to expect from his learning and his genius. If he thinks his own judgment not sufficiently enlightened, he may, by attending to the remarks which every paper will produce, rectify his opinions. If he should with too little premeditation encumber himself by an unwieldy subject, he can quit it without confessing his ignorance, and pass to other topicks less dangerous, or more tractable. And if he finds, with all his industry, and all his artifices, that he cannot deserve regard, or cannot attain it, he may let the design fall at once, and, without injury to others or himself, retire to amusements of greater pleasure, or to studies of better prospect.

NUMB. 2. SATURDAY, *March* 24, 1749-50.

Stare loco nescit, pereunt vestigia mille
Ante fugam, absentemque ferit gravis ungula campum.

STATIUS.

Th' impatient courser pants in every vein,
And pawing seems to beat the distant plain;
Hills, vales, and floods appear already crost,
And ere he starts, a thousand steps are lost. POPE.

THAT the mind of man is never satisfied with the objects immediately before it, but is always breaking away from the present moment, and losing itself in schemes of future felicity; and that we forget the proper use of the time now in our

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power, to provide for the enjoyment of that which, perhaps, may never be granted us, has been frequently remarked; and as this practice is a commodious subject of raillery to the gay, and of declamation to the serious, it has been ridiculed with all the pleasantry of wit, and exaggerated with all the amplifications of rhetorick. Every instance, by which its absurdity might appear most flagrant, has been studiously collected; it has been marked with every epithet of contempt, and all the tropes and figures have been called forth against it.

Censure is willingly indulged, because it always implies some superiority; men please themselves with imagining that they have made a deeper search, or wider survey, than others, and detected faults and follies, which escape vulgar observation. And the pleasure of wantoning in common topicks is so tempting to a writer, that he cannot easily resign it; a train of sentiments generally received enables him to shine without labour, and to conquer without a contest. It is so easy to laugh at the folly of him who lives only in idea, refuses immediate ease for distant pleasures, and, instead of enjoying the blessings of life, lets life glide away in preparations to enjoy them; it affords such opportunities of triumphant exultation, to exemplify the uncertainty of the human state, to rouse mortals from their dream, and inform them of the silent celerity of time, that we may believe authors willing rather to transmit than examine so advantageous a principle, and more inclined to pursue a track so smooth and so flowery than attentively to consider whether it leads to truth.

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This quality of looking forward into futurity, seems the unavoidable condition of a being, whose motions are gradual, and whose life is progressive: as his powers are limited, he must use means for the attainment of his ends, and intend first what he performs last; as by continual advances from his first stage of existence, he is perpetually varying the horizon of his prospects, he must always discover new motives of action, new excitements of fear, and allurements of desire.

The end therefore which at present calls forth our efforts, will be found, when it is once gained, to be only one of the means to some remoter end. The natural flights of the human mind are not from pleasure to pleasure, but from hope to hope.

He that directs his steps to a certain point, must frequently turn his eyes to that place which he strives to reach; he that undergoes the fatigue of labour must solace his weariness with the contemplation of its reward. In agriculture, one of the most simple and necessary employments, no man turns up the ground but because he thinks of the harvest, that harvest which blights may intercept, which inundations may sweep away, or which death or calamity may hinder him from reaping.

Yet as few maxims are widely received or long retained but for some conformity with truth and nature, it must be confessed, that this caution against keeping our view too intent upon remote advantages is not without its propriety or usefulness, though it may have been recited with too much levity, or inforced with too little distinction:

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for not to speak of that vehemence of desire which presses through right and wrong to its gratification, or that anxious inquietude which is justly chargeable with distrust of heaven, subjects too solemn for my present purpose; it frequently happens that, by indulging early the raptures of success, we forget the measures necessary to secure it, and suffer the imagination to riot in the fruition of some possible good, till the time of obtaining it has slipped away.

There would, however, be few enterprizes of great labour or hazard undertaken, if we had not the power of magnifying the advantages which we persuade ourselves to expect from them. When the knight of La Mancha gravely recounts to his companion the adventures by which he is to signalize himself in such a manner that he shall be summoned to the support of empires, solicited to accept the heiress of the crown which he has preserved, have honours and riches to scatter about him, and an island to bestow on his worthy squire, very few readers, amidst their mirth or pity, can deny that they have admitted visions of the same kind; though they have not, perhaps, expected events equally strange, or by means equally inadequate. When we pity him, we reflect on our own disappointments; and when we laugh, our hearts inform us that he is not more ridiculous than ourselves, except that he tells what we have only thought.

The understanding of a man naturally sanguine, may, indeed, be easily vitiated by the luxurious

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indulgence of hope, however necessary to the production of every thing great or excellent, as some plants are destroyed by too open exposure to that sun which gives life and beauty to the vegetable world.

Perhaps no class of the human species requires more to be cautioned against this anticipation of happiness, than those that aspire to the name of authors. A man of lively fancy no sooner finds a hint moving in his mind, than he makes momentaneous excursions to the press, and to the world, and, with a little encouragement from flattery, pushes forward into future ages, and prognosticates the honours to be paid him, when envy is extinct, and faction forgotten, and those, whom partiality now suffers to obscure him, shall have given way to the triflers of as short duration as themselves.

Those who have proceeded so far as to appeal to the tribunal of succeeding times, are not likely to be cured of their infatuation; but all endeavours ought to be used for the prevention of a disease, for which, when it has attained its height, perhaps no remedy will be found in the gardens of philosophy, however she may boast her physick of the mind, her catharticks of vice, or lenitives of passion.

I shall, therefore, while I am yet but lightly touched with the symptoms of the writer's malady, endeavour to fortify myself against the infection, not without some weak hope that my preservatives may extend their virtues to others, whose employment exposes them to the same danger.

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Laudis amore tumes? Sunt certa piacula, quæ te
Ter pure lecto poterunt recreare libello.

Is fame your passion? Wisdom's powerful charm,
If thrice read over, shall its force disarm. FRANCIS.

It is the sage advice of Epictetus, that a man should accustom himself often to think of what is most shocking and terrible, that by such reflections he may be preserved from too ardent wishes for seeming good, and from too much dejection in real evil.

There is nothing more dreadful to an author than neglect, compared with which, reproach, hatred, and opposition, are names of happiness; yet this worse, this meanest fate, every one who dares to write has reason to fear.

I nunc, et versus tecum meditare canoros.

Go now, and meditate thy tuneful lays. ELPHINSTON.

It may not be unfit for him who makes a new entrance into the lettered world, so far to suspect his own powers, as to believe that he possibly may deserve neglect; that nature may not have qualified him much to enlarge or embellish knowledge, nor sent him forth intitled by indisputable superiority to regulate the conduct of the rest of mankind; that, though the world must be granted to be yet in ignorance, he is not destined to dispel the cloud, nor to shine out as one of the luminaries of life. For this suspicion, every catalogue of a library will furnish sufficient reason; as he will find it crowded with names of men, who, though now forgotten, were once no less enterprizing or confident than himself, equally pleased with their

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own productions, equally caressed by their patrons, and flattered by their friends.

But though it should happen that an author is capable of excelling, yet his merit may pass without notice, huddled in the variety of things, and thrown into the general miscellany of life. He that endeavours after fame by writing, solicits the regard of a multitude fluctuating in pleasures or immersed in business, without time for intellectual amusements; he appeals to judges, prepossessed by passions, or corrupted by prejudices, which preclude their approbation of any new performance. Some are too indolent to read any thing, till its reputation is established; others too envious to promote that fame which gives them pain by its increase. What is new is opposed, because most are unwilling to be taught; and what is known is rejected, because it is not sufficiently considered, that men more frequently require to be reminded than informed. The learned are afraid to declare their opinion early, lest they should put their reputation in hazard; the ignorant always imagine themselves giving some proof of delicacy, when they refuse to be pleased: and he that finds his way to reputation through all these obstructions, must acknowledge that he is indebted to other causes besides his industry, his learning, or his wit.

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NUMB. 3. TUESDAY, *March* 27, 1750.

VIRTUS, *repulsæ nescia sordidæ,*
Intaminatis fulget honoribus,
Nec sumit, aut ponit secures
Arbitrio popularis auræ. HOR.

Undisappointed in designs,
With native honours Virtue shines;
Nor takes up pow'r, nor lays it down,
As giddy rabbles smile or frown. ELPHINSTON.

THE task of an author is, either to teach what is not known, or to recommend known truths by his manner of adorning them; either to let new light in upon the mind, and open new scenes to the prospect, or to vary the dress and situation of common objects, so as to give them fresh grace and more powerful attractions, to spread such flowers over the regions through which the intellect has already made its progress, as may tempt it to return, and take a second view of things hastily passed over, or negligently regarded.

Either of these labours is very difficult, because that they may not be fruitless, men must not only be persuaded of their errours, but reconciled to their guide; they must not only confess their ignorance, but, what is still less pleasing, must allow that he from whom they are to learn is more knowing than themselves.

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It might be imagined that such an employment was in itself sufficiently irksome and hazardous; that none would be found so malevolent as wantonly to add weight to the stone of Sisyphus; and that few endeavours would be used to obstruct those advances to reputation, which must be made at such an expence of time and thought, with so great hazard in the miscarriage, and with so little advantage from the success.

Yet there is a certain race of men, that either imagine it their duty, or make it their amusement, to hinder the reception of every work of learning or genius, who stand as centinels in the avenues of fame, and value themselves upon giving IGNORANCE and ENVY the first notice of a prey.

To these men, who distinguish themselves by the appellation of CRITICKS it is necessary for a new author to find some means of recommendation. It is probable, that the most malignant of these persecutors might be somewhat softened, and prevailed on, for a short time, to remit their fury. Having for this purpose considered many expedients, I find in the records of ancient times, that ARGUS was lulled by musick, and CERBERUS quieted with a sop; and am, therefore, inclined to believe that modern criticks, who, if they have not the eyes, have the watchfulness of ARGUS, and can bark as loud as CERBERUS, though, perhaps, they cannot bite with equal force, might be subdued by methods of the same kind. I have heard how some have been pacified with claret and a supper, and others laid asleep with the soft notes of flattery.

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Though the nature of my undertaking gives me sufficient reason to dread the united attacks of this virulent generation, yet, I have not hitherto persuaded myself to take any measures for flight or treaty. For I am in doubt whether they can act against me by lawful authority, and suspect that they have presumed upon a forged commission, stiled themselves the ministers of CRITICISM, without any authentick evidence of delegation, and uttered their own determinations as the decrees of a higher judicature.

CRITICISM, from whom they derive their claim to decide the fate of writers, was the eldest daughter of LABOUR and of TRUTH: she was, at her birth, committed to the care of JUSTICE, and brought up by her in the palace of WISDOM. Being soon distinguished by the celestials, for her uncommon qualities, she was appointed the governess of FANCY, and empowered to beat time to the chorus of the MUSES, when they sung before the throne of JUPITER.

When the MUSES condescended to visit this lower world, they came accompanied by CRITICISM, to whom, upon her descent from her native regions, JUSTICE gave a sceptre, to be carried aloft in her right hand, one end of which was tinctured with ambrosia, and inwreathed with a golden foliage of amaranths and bays; the other end was incircled with cypress and poppies, and dipped in the waters of oblivion. In her left hand, she bore an unextinguishable torch, manufactured by LABOUR, and lighted by TRUTH, of which it was the particular quality immediately to shew every thing in its true form, however it might be disguised to common

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eyes. Whatever ART could complicate, or FOLLY could confound, was, upon the first gleam of the Torch of TRUTH, exhibited in its distinct parts and original simplicity; it darted through the labyrinths of sophistry, and shewed at once all the absurdities to which they served for refuge; it pierced through the robes which rhetorick often sold to falsehood, and detected the disproportion of parts which artificial veils had been contrived to cover.

Thus furnished for the execution of her office, CRITICISM came down to survey the performances of those who professed themselves the votaries of the MUSES. Whatever was brought before her, she beheld by the steady light of the Torch of TRUTH, and when her examination had convinced her, that the laws of just writing had been observed, she touched it with the amaranthine end of the sceptre, and consigned it over to immortality.

But it more frequently happened, that in the works which required her inspection, there was some imposture attempted; that false colours were laboriously laid; that some secret inequality was found between the words and sentiments, or some dissimilitude of the ideas and the original objects; that incongruities were linked together, or that some parts were of no use but to enlarge the appearance of the whole, without contributing to its beauty, solidity, or usefulness.

Wherever such discoveries were made, and they were made whenever these faults were committed, CRITICISM refused the touch which conferred the sanction of immortality, and, when the errours were

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frequent and gross, reversed the sceptre, and let drops of lethe distil from the poppies and cypress a fatal mildew, which immediately began to waste the work away, till it was at last totally destroyed.

There were some compositions brought to the test, in which, when the strongest light was thrown upon them, their beauties and faults appeared so equally mingled, that CRITICISM stood with her sceptre poised in her hand, in doubt whether to shed lethe, or ambrosia, upon them. These at last increased to so great a number, that she was weary of attending such doubtful claims, and, for fear of using improperly the sceptre of JUSTICE, referred the cause to be considered by TIME.

The proceedings of TIME, though very dilatory, were, some few caprices excepted, conformable to justice: and many who thought themselves secure by a short forbearance, have sunk under his scythe, as they were posting down with their volumes in triumph to futurity. It was observable that some were destroyed by little and little, and others crushed for ever by a single blow.

CRITICISM having long kept her eye fixed steadily upon TIME was at last so well satisfied with his conduct, that she withdrew from the earth with her patroness ASTREA, and left PREJUDICE and FALSE TASTE to ravage at large as the associates of FRAUD and MISCHIEF; contenting herself thenceforth to shed her influence from afar upon some select minds, fitted for its reception by learning and by virtue.

Before her departure she broke her sceptre, of

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which the shivers, that formed the ambrosial end, were caught up by FLATTERY, and those that had been infected with the waters of lethe were, with equal haste, seized by MALEVOLENCE. The followers of FLATTERY, to whom she distributed her part of the sceptre, neither had nor desired light, but touched indiscriminately whatever POWER or INTEREST happened to exhibit. The companions of MALEVOLENCE were supplied by the FURIES with a torch, whichhad this quality peculiar to infernal lustre, that its light fell only upon faults.

> No light, but rather darkness visible,
> Serv'd only to discover sights of woe.

With these fragments of authority, the slaves of FLATTERY and MALEVOLENCE marched out, at the command of their mistresses, to confer immortality, or condemn to oblivion. But the sceptre had now lost its power; and TIME passes his sentence at leisure, without any regard to their determinations.

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NUMB. 4. SATURDAY, *March* 31, 1750.

Simul et jucunda et idonea dicere vitæ. HOR.

And join both profit and delight in one. CREECH.

THE works of fiction, with which the present generation seems more particularly delighted, are such as exhibit life in its true state, diversified only by accidents that daily happen in the world, and influenced by passions and qualities which are really to be found in conversing with mankind.

This kind of writing may be termed not improperly the comedy of romance, and is to be conducted nearly by the rules of comick poetry. Its province is to bring about natural events by easy means, and to keep up curiosity without the help of wonder: it is therefore precluded from the machines and expedients of the heroick romance, and can neither employ giants to snatch away a lady from the nuptial rites, nor knights to bring her back from captivity; it can neither bewilder its personages in deserts, nor lodge them in imaginary castles.

I remember a remark made by Scaliger upon Pontanus, that all his writings are filled with the same images; and that if you take from him his lilies and his roses, his satyrs and his dryads, he will have nothing left that can be called poetry. In like manner almost all the fictions of the last age will vanish, if you deprive them of a hermit and a wood, a battle and a shipwreck.

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Why this wild strain of imagination found reception so long in polite and learned ages, it is not easy to conceive; but we cannot wonder that while readers could be procured, the authors were willing to continue it; for when a man had by practice gained some fluency of language, he had no further care than to retire to his closet, let loose his invention, and heat his mind with incredibilities; a book was thus produced without fear of criticism, without the toil of study, without knowledge of nature, or acquaintance with life.

The task of our present writers is very different; it requires, together with that learning which is to be gained from books, that experience which can never be attained by solitary diligence, but must arise from general converse and accurate observation of the living world. Their performances have, as Horace expresses it, *plus oneris quantum veniæ minus*, little indulgence, and therefore more difficulty. They are engaged in portraits of which every one knows the original, and can detect any deviation from exactness of resemblance. Other writings are safe, except from the malice of learning, but these are in danger from every common reader: as the slipper ill executed was censured by a shoemaker who happened to stop in his way at the Venus of Apelles.

But the fear of not being approved as just copiers of human manners, is not the most important concern that an author of this sort ought to have before him. These books are written chiefly to the young, the ignorant, and the idle, to whom they serve as

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lectures of conduct, and introductions into life. They are the entertainment of minds unfurnished with ideas, and therefore easily susceptible of impressions; not fixed by principles, and therefore easily following the current of fancy; not informed by experience, and consequently open to every false suggestion and partial account.

That the highest degree of reverence should be paid to youth, and that nothing indecent should be suffered to approach their eyes or ears; are precepts extorted by sense and virtue from an ancient writer, by no means eminent for chastity of thought. The same kind, though not the same degree, of caution, is required in every thing which is laid before them, to secure them from unjust prejudices, perverse opinions, and incongruous combinations of images.

In the romances formerly written, every transaction and sentiment was so remote from all that passes among men, that the reader was in very little danger of making any applications to himself; the virtues and crimes were equally beyond his sphere of activity; and he amused himself with heroes and with traitors, deliverers and persecutors, as with beings of another species, whose actions were regulated upon motives of their own, and who had neither faults nor excellencies in common with himself.

But when an adventurer is levelled with the rest of the world, and acts in such scenes of the universal drama, as may be the lot of any other man; young spectators fix their eyes upon him with closer attention, and hope, by observing his behaviour and

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success, to regulate their own practices, when they shall be engaged in the like part.

For this reason these familiar histories may perhaps be made of greater use than the solemnities of professed morality, and convey the knowledge of vice and virtue with more efficacy than axioms and definitions. But if the power of example is so great as to take possession of the memory by a kind of violence, and produce effects almost without the intervention of the will, care ought to be taken, that, when the choice is unrestrained, the best examples only should be exhibited; and that which is likely to operate so strongly, should not be mischievous or uncertain in its effects.

The chief advantage which these fictions have over real life is, that their authors are at liberty, though not to invent, yet to select objects, and to cull from the mass of mankind, those individuals upon which the attention ought most to be employed: as a diamond, though it cannot be made, may be polished by art, and placed in such a situation, as to display that lustre which before was buried among common stones.

It is justly considered as the greatest excellency of art, to imitate nature; but it is necessary to distinguish those parts of nature, which are most proper for imitation: greater care is still required in representing life, which is so often discoloured by passion, or deformed by wickedness. If the world be promiscuously described, I cannot see of what use it can be to read the account: or why it may not be as safe to turn the eye immediately upon

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mankind as upon a mirrour which shews all that presents itself without discrimination.

It is therefore not a sufficient vindication of a character, that it is drawn as it appears; for many characters ought never to be drawn: nor of a narrative, that the train of events is agreeable to observation and experience; for that observation which is called knowledge of the world, will be found much more frequently to make men cunning than good. The purpose of these writings is surely not only to shew mankind, but to provide that they may be seen hereafter with less hazard; to teach the means of avoiding the snares which are laid by TREACHERY for INNOCENCE, without infusing any wish for that superiority with which the betrayer flatters his vanity; to give the power of counteracting fraud, without the temptation to practise it; to initiate youth by mock encounters in the art of necessary defence, and to encrease prudence without impairing virtue.

Many writers, for the sake of following nature, so mingle good and bad qualities in their principal personages, that they are both equally conspicuous; and as we accompany them through their adventures with delight, and are led by degrees to interest ourselves in their favour, we lose the abhorrence of their faults, because they do not hinder our pleasure, or, perhaps, regard them with some kindness, for being united with so much merit.

There have been men indeed splendidly wicked, whose endowments threw a brightness on their crimes, and whom scarce any villany made perfectly

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detestable, because they never could be wholly divested of their excellencies; but such have been in all ages the great corrupters of the world, and their resemblance ought no more to be preserved, than the art of murdering without pain.

Some have advanced, without due attention to the consequences of this notion, that certain virtues have their correspondent faults, and therefore that to exhibit either apart is to deviate from probability. Thus men are observed by Swift to be "grateful in the same degree as they are resentful." This principle, with others of the same kind, supposes man to act from a brute impulse, and pursue a certain degree of inclination, without any choice of the object; for, otherwise, though it should be allowed that gratitude and resentment arise from the same constitution of the passions, it follows not that they will be equally indulged when reason is consulted; yet, unless that consequence be admitted, this sagacious maxim becomes an empty sound, without any relation to practice or to life.

Nor is it evident, that even the first motions to these effects are always in the same proportion. For pride, which produces quickness of resentment, will obstruct gratitude, by unwillingness to admit that inferiority which obligation implies; and it is very unlikely that he who cannot think he receives a favour, will acknowledge or repay it.

It is of the utmost importance to mankind, that positions of this tendency should be laid open and confuted; for while men consider good and evil as

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springing from the same root, they will spare the one for the sake of the other, and in judging, if not of others at least of themselves, will be apt to estimate their virtues by their vices. To this fatal errour all those will contribute, who confound the colours of right and wrong, and, instead of helping to settle their boundaries, mix them with so much art, that no common mind is able to disunite them.

In narratives where historical veracity has no place, I cannot discover why there should not be exhibited the most perfect idea of virtue; of virtue not angelical, nor above probability, for what we cannot credit, we shall never imitate, but the highest and purest that humanity can reach, which, exercised in such trials as the various revolutions of things shall bring upon it, may, by conquering some calamities, and enduring others, teach us what we may hope, and what we can perform. Vice, for vice is necessary to be shewn, should always disgust; nor should the graces of gaiety, or the dignity of courage, be so united with it, as to reconcile it to the mind. Wherever it appears, it should raise hatred by the malignity of its practices, and contempt by the meanness of its stratagems: for while it is supported by either parts or spirit, it will be seldom heartily abhorred. The Roman tyrant was content to be hated, if he was but feared; and there are thousands of the readers of romances willing to be thought wicked, if they may be allowed to be wits. It is therefore to be steadily inculcated, that virtue is the highest proof of understanding, and the only solid basis of great-

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ness; and that vice is the natural consequence of narrow thoughts; that it begins in mistake, and ends in ignominy *.

NUMB. 5. TUESDAY, *April* 3, 1750.

Et nunc omnis ager, nunc omnis parturit arbos,
Nunc frondent silvæ, nunc formosissimus annus. VIRG.

Now ev'ry field, now ev'ry tree is green;
Now genial Nature's fairest face is seen. ELPHINSTON.

EVERY man is sufficiently discontented with some circumstances of his present state, to suffer his imagination to range more or less in quest of future happiness, and to fix upon some point of time, in which, by the removal of the inconvenience which now perplexes him, or acquisition of the advantage which he at present wants, he shall find the condition of his life very much improved.

When this time, which is too often expected with great impatience, at last arrives, it generally comes without the blessing for which it was desired; but we solace ourselves with some new prospect, and press forward again with equal eagerness.

It is lucky for a man, in whom this temper pre-

* This excellent paper was occasioned by the popularity of Roderick Random, and Tom Jones, which appeared about this time, and have been the models of that species of romance, now known by the more common name of *Novel*. C.

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vails, when he turns his hopes upon things wholly out of his own power; since he forbears then to precipitate his affairs, for the sake of the great event that is to complete his felicity, and waits for the blissful hour with less neglect of the measures necessary to be taken in the mean time.

I have long known a person of this temper, who indulged his dream of happiness with less hurt to himself than such chimerical wishes commonly produce, and adjusted his scheme with such address, that his hopes were in full bloom three parts of the year, and in the other part never wholly blasted. Many, perhaps, would be desirous of learning by what means he procured to himself such a cheap and lasting satisfaction. It was gained by a constant practice of referring the removal of all his uneasiness to the coming of the next spring; if his health was impaired, the spring would restore it; if what he wanted was at a high price, it would fall its value in the spring.

The spring indeed did often come without any of these effects, but he was always certain that the next would be more propitious; nor was ever convinced, that the present spring would fail him before the middle of summer; for he always talked of the spring as coming till it was past, and when it was once past, every one agreed with him that it was coming.

By long converse with this man, I am, perhaps, brought to feel immoderate pleasure in the contemplation of this delightful season; but I have the satisfaction of finding many whom it can be no shame

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to resemble, infected with the same enthusiasm; for there is, I believe, scarce any poet of eminence, who has not left some testimony of his fondness for the flowers, the zephyrs, and the warblers of the spring. Nor has the most luxuriant imagination been able to describe the serenity and happiness of the golden age, otherwise than by giving a perpetual spring, as the highest reward of uncorrupted innocence.

There is, indeed, something inexpressibly pleasing in the annual renovation of the world, and the new display of the treasures of nature. The cold and darkness of winter, with the naked deformity of every object on which we turn our eyes, make us rejoice at the succeeding season, as well for what we have escaped as for what we may enjoy; and every budding flower, which a warm situation brings early to our view, is considered by us as a messenger to notify the approach of more joyous days.

The SPRING affords to a mind, so free from the disturbance of cares or passions as to be vacant to calm amusements, almost every thing that our present state makes us capable of enjoying. The variegated verdure of the fields and woods, the succession of grateful odours, the voice of pleasure pouring out its notes on every side, with the gladness apparently conceived by every animal, from the growth of his food, and the clemency of the weather, throw over the whole earth an air of gaiety, significantly expressed by the smile of nature.

Yet there are men to whom these scenes are able to give no delight, and who hurry away from all the varieties of rural beauty, to lose their hours

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and divert their thoughts by cards or assemblies, a tavern dinner, or the prattle of the day.

It may be laid down as a position which will seldom deceive, that when a man cannot bear his own company, there is something wrong. He must fly from himself, either because he feels a tediousness in life from the equipoise of an empty mind, which, having no tendency to one motion more than another, but as it is impelled by some external power, must always have recourse to foreign objects; or he must be afraid of the intrusion of some unpleasing ideas, and perhaps is struggling to escape from the remembrance of a loss, the fear of a calamity, or some other thought of greater horr our.

Those whom sorrow incapacitates to enjoy the pleasures of contemplation, may properly apply to such diversions, provided they are innocent, as lay strong hold on the attention; and those, whom fear of any future affliction chains down to misery, must endeavour to obviate the danger.

My considerations shall, on this occasion, be turned on such as are burthensome to themselves merely because they want subjects for reflection, and to whom the volume of nature is thrown open without affording them pleasure or instruction, because they never learned to read the characters.

A French author has advanced this seeming paradox, that *very few men know how to take a walk*; and, indeed, it is true, that few know how to take a walk with a prospect of any other pleasure, than the same company would have afforded them at home.

There are animals that borrow their colour from

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the neighbouring body, and consequently vary their hue as they happen to change their place. In like manner it ought to be the endeavour of every man to derive his reflections from the objects about him; for it is to no purpose that he alters his position, if his attention continues fixed to the same point. The mind should be kept open to the access of every new idea, and so far disengaged from the predominance of particular thoughts, as easily to accommodate itself to occasional entertainment.

A man that has formed this habit of turning every new object to his entertainment, finds in the productions of nature an inexhaustible stock of materials upon which he can employ himself, without any temptations to envy or malevolence; faults, perhaps, seldom totally avoided by those, whose judgment is much exercised upon the works of art. He has always a certain prospect of discovering new reasons for adoring the sovereign Author of the universe, and probable hopes of making some discovery of benefit to others, or of profit to himself. There is no doubt but many vegetables and animals have qualities that might be of great use, to the knowledge of which there is not required much force of penetration, or fatigue of study, but only frequent experiments, and close attention. What is said by the chemists of their darling mercury, is, perhaps, true of every body through the whole creation, that if a thousand lives should be spent upon it, all its properties would not be found out.

Mankind must necessarily be diversified by va-

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rious tastes, since life affords and requires such multiplicity of employments, and a nation of naturalists is neither to be hoped, nor desired; but it is surely not improper to point out a fresh amusement to those who languish in health, and repine in plenty, for want of some source of diversion that may be less easily exhausted, and to inform the multitudes of both sexes, who are burdened with every new day, that there are many shows which they have not seen.

He that enlarges his curiosity after the works of nature, demonstrably multiplies the inlets to happiness; and, therefore, the younger part of my readers, to whom I dedicate this vernal speculation, must excuse me for calling upon them, to make use at once of the spring of the year, and the spring of life; to acquire, while their minds may be yet impressed with new images, a love of innocent pleasures, and an ardour for useful knowledge; and to remember, that a blighted spring makes a barren year, and that the vernal flowers, however beautiful and gay, are only intended by nature as preparatives to autumnal fruits.

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NUMB. 6. SATURDAY, *April* 7, 1750.

Strenua nos exercet inertia, navibus atque
Quadrigis petimus bene vivere: quod petis, hic est;
Est Ulubris; animus si te non deficit æquus. HOR.

Active in indolence, abroad we roam
In quest of happiness which dwells at home:
With vain pursuits fatigu'd, at length you'll find,
No place excludes it from an equal mind. ELPHINSTON.

THAT man should never suffer his happiness to depend upon external circumstances, is one of the chief precepts of the Stoical philosophy; a precept, indeed, which that lofty sect has extended beyond the condition of human life, and in which some of them seem to have comprised an utter exclusion of all corporal pain and pleasure from the regard or attention of a wise man.

Such *sapientia insaniens*, as Horace calls the doctrine of another sect, such extravagance of philosophy, can want neither authority nor argument for its confutation; it is overthrown by the experience of every hour, and the powers of nature rise up against it. But we may very properly inquire, how near to this exalted state it is in our power to approach, how far we can exempt ourselves from outward influences, and secure to our minds a state of tranquillity: for, though the boast of absolute independence is ridiculous and vain, yet a mean flexibility to every impulse, and a patient submission

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to the tyranny of casual troubles, is below the dignity of that mind, which, however depraved or weakened, boasts its derivation from a celestial original, and hopes for an union with infinite goodness, and unvariable felicity.

Ni vitiis pejora fovens
Proprium deserat ortum.

Unless the soul, to vice a thrall,
Desert her own original.

The necessity of erecting ourselves to some degree of intellectual dignity, and of preserving resources of pleasure, which may not be wholly at the mercy of accident, is never more apparent than when we turn our eyes upon those whom fortune has let loose to their own conduct; who, not being chained down by their condition to a regular and stated allotment of their hours, are obliged to find themselves business or diversion, and having nothing within that can entertain or employ them, are compelled to try all the arts of destroying time.

The numberless expedients practised by this class of mortals to alleviate the burthen of life, are not less shameful, nor, perhaps, much less pitiable, than those to which a trader on the edge of bankruptcy is reduced. I have seen melancholy overspread a whole family at the disappointment of a party for cards; and when, after the proposal of a thousand schemes, and the dispatch of the footman upon a hundred messages, they have submitted, with gloomy resignation, to the misfortune of passing one evening in conversation with each other; on a sudden,

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such are the revolutions of the world, an unexpected visitor has brought them relief, acceptable as provision to a starving city, and enabled them to hold out till the next day.

The general remedy of those, who are uneasy without knowing the cause, is change of place; they are willing to imagine that their pain is the consequence of some local inconvenience, and endeavour to fly from it, as children from their shadows; always hoping for some more satisfactory delight from every new scene, and always returning home with disappointment and complaints.

Who can look upon this kind of infatuation, without reflecting on those that suffer under the dreadful symptom of canine madness, termed by physicians the *dread of water*? These miserable wretches, unable to drink, though burning with thirst, are sometimes known to try various contortions, or inclinations of the body, flattering themselves that they can swallow in one posture that liquor which they find in another to repel their lips.

Yet such folly is not peculiar to the thoughtless or ignorant, but sometimes seizes those minds which seem most exempted from it, by the variety of attainments, quickness of penetration, or severity of judgment; and, indeed, the pride of wit and knowledge is often mortified by finding that they confer no security against the common errours, which mislead the weakest and meanest of mankind.

These reflections arose in my mind upon the remembrance of a passage in Cowley's preface to his

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poems, where, however exalted by genius, and enlarged by study, he informs us of a scheme of happiness to which the imagination of a girl upon the loss of her first lover could have scarcely given way; but which he seems to have indulged, till he had totally forgotten its absurdity, and would probably have put in execution, had he been hindered only by his reason.

" My desire," says he, " has been for some years past, though the execution has been accidentally diverted, and does still vehemently continue, to retire myself to some of our American plantations, not to seek for gold, or enrich myself with the traffick of those parts, which is the end of most men that travel thither; but to forsake this world for ever, with all the vanities and vexations of it, and to bury myself there in some obscure retreat, but not without the consolation of letters and philosophy."

Such was the chimerical provision which Cowley had made in his own mind, for the quiet of his remaining life, and which he seems to recommend to posterity, since there is no other reason for disclosing it. Surely no stronger instance can be given of a persuasion that content was the inhabitant of particular regions, and that a man might set sail with a fair wind, and leave behind him all his cares, incumbrances, and calamities.

If he travelled so far with no other purpose than to *bury himself in some obscure retreat*, he might have found, in his own country, innumerable coverts sufficiently dark to have concealed the genius of Cowley; for whatever might be his opinion

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of the importunity with which he might be summoned back into publick life, a short experience would have convinced him, that privation is easier than acquisition, and that it would require little continuance to free himself from the intrusion of the world. There is pride enough in the human heart to prevent much desire of acquaintance with a man, by whom we are sure to be neglected, however his reputation for science or virtue may excite our curiosity or esteem; so that the lover of retirement needs not be afraid lest the respect of strangers should overwhelm him with visits. Even those to whom he has formerly been known, will very patiently support his absence when they have tried a little to live without him, and found new diversions for those moments which his company contributed to exhilarate.

It was, perhaps, ordained by Providence, to hinder us from tyrannizing over one another, that no individual should be of such importance, as to cause, by his retirement or death, any chasm in the world. And Cowley had conversed to little purpose with mankind, if he had never remarked, how soon the useful friend, the gay companion, and the favoured lover, when once they are removed from before the sight, give way to the succession of new objects.

The privacy, therefore, of his hermitage might have been safe enough from violation, though he had chosen it within the limits of his native island; he might have found here preservatives against the *vanities* and *vexations* of the world, not less efficacious than those which the woods or fields of Ame-

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rica could afford him: but having once his mind imbittered with disgust, he conceived it impossible to be far enough from the cause of his uneasiness; and was posting away with the expedition of a coward, who, for want of venturing to look behind him, thinks the enemy perpetually at his heels.

When he was interrupted by company, or fatigued with business, he so strongly imaged to himself the happiness of leisure and retreat, that he determined to enjoy them for the future without interruption, and to exclude for ever all that could deprive him of his darling satisfactions. He forgot, in the vehemence of desire, that solitude and quiet owe their pleasures to those miseries, which he was so studious to obviate: for such are the vicissitudes of the world, through all its parts, that day and night, labour and rest, hurry and retirement, endear each other; such are the changes that keep the mind in action; we desire, we pursue, we obtain, we are satiated: we desire something else, and begin a new pursuit.

If he had proceeded in his project, and fixed his habitation in the most delightful part of the new world, it may be doubted, whether his distance from the *vanities* of life, would have enabled him to keep away the *vexations*. It is common for a man, who feels pain, to fancy that he could bear it better in any other part. Cowley having known the troubles and perplexities of a particular condition, readily persuaded himself that nothing worse was to be found, and that every alteration would bring some improvement: he never suspected that

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the cause of his unhappiness was within, that his own passions were not sufficiently regulated, and that he was harassed by his own impatience, which could never be without something to awaken it, would accompany him over the sea, and find its way to his American elysium. He would, upon the trial, have been soon convinced, that the fountain of content must spring up in the mind: and that he who has so little knowledge of human nature, as to seek happiness by changing any thing but his own dispositions, will waste his life in fruitless efforts, and multiply the griefs which he purposes to remove*.

* See Dr. Johnson's Life of Cowley.

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NUMB. 7. TUESDAY, *April* 10, 1750.

O qui perpetuâ mundum ratione gubernas,
Terrarum cœlique sator!——
Disjice terrenæ nebulas & pondera molis,
Atque tuo splendore mica! Tu namque serenum,
Tu requies tranquilla piis. Te cernere, finis,
Principium, vector, dux, semita, terminus idem. BOETHIUS.

O thou whose pow'r o'er moving worlds presides,
Whose voice created, and whose wisdom guides,
On darkling man in pure effulgence shine,
And chear the clouded mind with light divine.
'Tis thine alone to calm the pious breast
With silent confidence and holy rest:
From thee, great God, we spring, to thee we tend,
Path, motive, guide, original, and end.

THE love of RETIREMENT has, in all ages, adhered closely to those minds, which have been most enlarged by knowledge, or elevated by genius. Those who enjoyed every thing generally supposed to confer happiness, have been forced to seek it in the shades of privacy. Though they possessed both power and riches, and were, therefore, surrounded by men who considered it as their chief interest to remove from them every thing that might offend their ease, or interrupt their pleasure, they have soon felt the languors of satiety, and found themselves unable to pursue the race of life without frequent respirations of intermediate solitude.

To produce this disposition, nothing appears requisite but quick sensibility, and active imagination; for, though not devoted to virtue, or science, the man, whose faculties enable him to make ready

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comparisons of the present with the past, will find such a constant recurrence of the same pleasures and troubles, the same expectations and disappointments, that he will gladly snatch an hour of retreat, to let his thoughts expatiate at large, and seek for that variety in his own ideas, which the objects of sense cannot afford him.

Nor will greatness, or abundance, exempt him from the importunities of this desire, since, if he is born to think, he cannot restrain himself from a thousand inquiries and speculations, which he must pursue by his own reason, and which the splendour of his condition can only hinder: for those who are most exalted above dependance or control, are yet condemned to pay so large a tribute of their time to custom, ceremony, and popularity, that, according to the Greek proverb, no man in the house is more a slave than the master.

When a king asked Euclid, the mathematician, whether he could not explain his art to him in a more compendious manner? he was answered, That there was no royal way to geometry. (Other things may be seized by might, or purchased with money, but knowledge is to be gained only by study, and study to be prosecuted only in retirement.)

These are some of the motives which have had power to sequester kings and heroes from the crowds that soothed them with flatteries, or inspirited them with acclamations; but their efficacy seems confined to the higher mind, and to operate little upon the common classes of mankind, to whose conceptions the present assemblage of things is adequate, and who

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seldom range beyond those entertainments and vexations, which solicit their attention by pressing on their senses.

But there is an universal reason for some stated intervals of solitude, which the institutions of the church call upon me now especially to mention; a reason which extends as wide as moral duty, or the hopes of divine favour in a future state; and which ought to influence all ranks of life, and all degrees of intellect; since none can imagine themselves not comprehended in its obligation, but such as determine to set their Maker at defiance by obstinate wickedness, or whose enthusiastick security of his approbation places them above external ordinances, and all human means of improvement.

The great task of him who conducts his life by the precepts of religion, is to make the future predominate over the present, to impress upon his mind so strong a sense of the importance of obedience to the divine will, of the value of the reward promised to virtue, and the terrours of the punishment denounced against crimes, as may overbear all the temptations which temporal hope or fear can bring in his way, and enable him to bid equal defiance to joy and sorrow, to turn away at one time from the allurements of ambition, and push forward at another against the threats of calamity.

It is not without reason that the apostle represents our passage through this stage of our existence by images drawn from the alarms and solicitude of a military life; for we are placed in such a state, that almost every thing about us conspires against our chief interest. We are in danger from whatever can

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get possession of our thoughts; all that can excite in us either pain or pleasure, has a tendency to obstruct the way that leads to happiness, and either to turn us aside, or retard our progress.

Our senses, our appetites, and our passions, are our lawful and faithful guides, in most things that relate solely to this life; and, therefore, by the hourly necessity of consulting them, we gradually sink into an implicit submission, and habitual confidence. Every act of compliance with their motions facilitates a second compliance, every new step towards depravity is made with less reluctance than the former, and thus the descent to life merely sensual is perpetually accelerated.

The senses have not only that advantage over conscience, which things necessary must always have over things chosen, but they have likewise a kind of prescription in their favour. We feared pain much earlier than we apprehended guilt, and were delighted with the sensations of pleasure, before we had capacities to be charmed with the beauty of rectitude. To this power, thus early established, and incessantly increasing, it must be remembered that almost every man has, in some part of his life, added new strength by a voluntary or negligent subjection of himself; for who is there that has not instigated his appetites by indulgence, or suffered them, by an unresisting neutrality, to enlarge their dominion, and multiply their demands?

From the necessity of dispossessing the sensitive faculties of the influence which they must naturally gain by this pre-occupation of the soul, arises that conflict between opposite desires in the first endea-

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vours after a religious life; which, however enthusiastically it may have been described, or however contemptuously ridiculed, will naturally be felt in some degree, though varied without end, by different tempers of mind, and innumerable circumstances of health or condition, greater or less fervour, more or fewer temptations to relapse.

From the perpetual necessity of consulting the animal faculties, in our provision for the present life, arises the difficulty of withstanding their impulses, even in cases where they ought to be of no weight; for the motions of sense are instantaneous, its objects strike unsought, we are accustomed to follow its directions, and therefore often submit to the sentence without examining the authority of the judge.

Thus it appears, upon a philosophical estimate, that, supposing the mind, at any certain time, in an equipoise between the pleasures of this life, and the hopes of futurity, present objects falling more frequently into the scale, would in time preponderate, and that our regard for an invisible state would grow every moment weaker, till at last it would lose all its activity, and become absolutely without effect.

To prevent this dreadful event, the balance is put into our own hands, and we have power to transfer the weight to either side. The motives to a life of holiness are infinite, not less than the favour or anger of Omnipotence, not less than eternity of happiness or misery. But these can only influence our conduct as they gain our attention, which the business or diversions of the world are always calling off by contrary attractions.

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The great art therefore of piety, and the end for which all the rites of religion seem to be instituted, is the perpetual renovation of the motives to virtue, by a voluntary employment of our mind in the contemplation of its excellence, its importance, and its necessity, which, in proportion as they are more frequently and more willingly revolved, gain a more forcible and permanent influence, till in time they become the reigning ideas, the standing principles of action, and the test by which every thing proposed to the judgment is rejected or approved.

To facilitate this change of our affections, it is necessary that we weaken the temptations of the world, by retiring at certain seasons from it; for its influence, arising only from its presence, is much lessened when it becomes the object of solitary meditation. A constant residence amidst noise and pleasure, inevitably obliterates the impressions of piety, and a frequent abstraction of ourselves into a state, where this life, like the next, operates only upon the reason, will reinstate religion in its just authority, even without those irradiations from above, the hope of which I have no intention to withdraw from the sincere and the diligent.

This is that conquest of the world and of ourselves, which has been always considered as the perfection of human nature; and this is only to be obtained by fervent prayer, steady resolutions, and frequent retirement from folly and vanity, from the cares of avarice, and the joys of intemperance, from the lulling sounds of deceitful flattery, and the tempting sight of prosperous wickedness.

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NUMB. 8. SATURDAY, *April* 14, 1750.

—— Patitur pœnas peccandi sola voluntas;
Nam scelus intra se tacitum qui cogitat ullum,
Facti crimen habet. JUV.

For he that but conceives a crime in thought,
Contracts the danger of an actual fault. CREECH.

IF the most active and industrious of mankind was able, at the close of life, to recollect distinctly his past moments, and distribute them in a regular account, according to the manner in which they have been spent, it is scarcely to be imagined how few would be marked out to the mind, by any permanent or visible effects, how small a proportion his real action would bear to his seeming possibilities of action, how many chasms he would find of wide and continued vacuity, and how many interstitial spaces unfilled, even in the most tumultuous hurries of business, and the most eager vehemence of pursuit.

It is said by modern philosophers, that not only the great globes of matter are thinly scattered through the universe, but the hardest bodies are so porous, that, if all matter were compressed to perfect solidity, it might be contained in a cube of a few feet. In like manner, if all the employment of life were crowded into the time which it really occupied, perhaps a few weeks, days, or hours, would be sufficient for its accomplishment, so far as the mind was engaged in the performance. For such is the inequality of our corporeal to our intel-

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lectual faculties, that we contrive in minutes what we execute in years, and the soul often stands an idle spectator of the labour of the hands, and expedition of the feet.

For this reason the ancient generals often found themselves at leisure to pursue the study of philosophy in the camp; and Lucan, with historical veracity, makes Cæsar relate of himself, that he noted the revolutions of the stars in the midst of preparations for battle.

——*Media inter prælia semper*
Sideribus, cælique plagis, superisque vacavi.

Amid the storms of war, with curious eyes
I trace the planets and survey the skies.

That the soul always exerts her peculiar powers, with greater or less force, is very probable, though the common occasions of our present condition require but a small part of that incessant cogitation; and by the natural frame of our bodies, and general combination of the world, we are so frequently condemned to inactivity, that as through all our time we are thinking, so for a great part of our time we can only think.

Lest a power so restless should be either unprofitably or hurtfully employed, and the superfluities of intellect run to waste, it is no vain speculation to consider how we may govern our thoughts, restrain them from irregular motions, or confine them from boundless dissipation.

How the understanding is best conducted to the knowledge of science, by what steps it is to be led forwards in its pursuit, how it is to be cured of its

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defects, and habituated to new studies, has been the inquiry of many acute and learned men, whose observations I shall not either adopt or censure: my purpose being to consider the moral discipline of the mind, and to promote the increase of virtue rather than of learning.

This inquiry seems to have been neglected for want of remembering, that all action has its origin in the mind, and that therefore to suffer the thoughts to be vitiated, is to poison the fountains of morality; irregular desires will produce licentious practices; what men allow themselves to wish they will soon believe, and will be at last incited to execute what they please themselves with contriving.

For this reason the casuists of the Roman church, who gain, by confession, great opportunities of knowing human nature, have generally determined that what it is a crime to do, it is a crime to think *. Since by revolving with pleasure the facility, safety, or advantage of a wicked deed, a man soon begins to find his constancy relax, and his detestation soften; the happiness of success glittering before him, withdraws his attention from the atrociousness of the guilt, and acts are at last confidently perpetrated, of which the first conception only crept into the mind, disguised in pleasing complications, and permitted rather than invited.

No man has ever been drawn to crimes by love or jealousy, envy or hatred, but he can tell how easily he might at first have repelled the temptation, how readily his mind would have obeyed a

* This was determined before their time. See Matt. ch. v. v. 28. C.

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call to any other object, and how weak his passion has been after some casual avocation, till he has recalled it again to his heart, and revived the viper by too warm a fondness.

Such, therefore, is the importance of keeping reason a constant guard over imagination, that we have otherwise no security for our own virtue, but may corrupt our hearts in the most recluse solitude, with more pernicious and tyrannical appetites and wishes than the commerce of the world will generally produce; for we are easily shocked by crimes which appear at once in their full magnitude, but the gradual growth of our own wickedness, endeared by interest, and palliated by all the artifices of self-deceit, gives us time to form distinctions in our own favour, and reason by degrees submits to absurdity, as the eye is in time accommodated to darkness.

In this disease of the soul, it is of the utmost importance to apply remedies at the beginning; and therefore I shall endeavour to shew what thoughts are to be rejected or improved, as they regard the past, present, or future; in hopes that some may be awakened to caution and vigilance, who, perhaps, indulge themselves in dangerous dreams, so much the more dangerous, because, being yet only dreams, they are concluded innocent.

The recollection of the past is only useful by way of provision for the future; and, therefore in reviewing all occurrences that fall under a religious consideration, it is proper that a man stop at the first thoughts, to remark how he was led thither, and why he continues the reflection. If

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he is dwelling with delight upon a stratagem of successful fraud, a night of licentious riot, or an intrigue of guilty pleasure, let him summon off his imagination as from an unlawful pursuit, expel those passages from his remembrance, of which, though he cannot seriously approve them, the pleasure overpowers the guilt, and refer them to a future hour, when they may be considered with greater safety. Such an hour will certainly come; for the impressions of past pleasure are always lessening, but the sense of guilt, which respects futurity, continues the same.

The serious and impartial retrospect of our conduct, is indisputably necessary to the confirmation or recovery of virtue, and is, therefore, recommended under the name of self-examination, by divines, as the first act previous to repentance. It is, indeed, of so great use, that without it we should always be to begin life, be seduced for ever by the same allurements, and misled by the same fallacies. But in order that we may not lose the advantage of our experience, we must endeavour to see every thing in its proper form, and excite in ourselves those sentiments, which the great Author of nature has decreed the concomitants or followers of good and bad actions.

Μηδ' ὕπνον μαλακοῖσιν ἐπ' ὄμμασι προσδέξασθαι,
Πρὶν τῶν ἡμερινῶν ἔργων τρὶς ἕκαστον ἐπελθεῖν·
Πῆ παρέβην; τί δ' ἔρεξα; τί μοι δέον οὐκ ἐτελέσθη;
Ἀρξάμενος δ' ἀπὸ πρώτου ἐπέξιθι· καὶ μετέπειτα,
Δειλὰ μὲν ἐκπρήξας, ἐπιπλήσσεο, χρηστὰ δὲ, τέρπου.

'Let not sleep,' says Pythagoras, 'fall upon thy eyes till thou hast thrice reviewed the transactions of the past day. Where

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have I turned aside from rectitude? What have I been doing? What have I left undone, which I ought to have done? Begin thus from the first act, and proceed; and in conclusion, at the ill which thou hast done be troubled, and rejoice for the good.'

Our thoughts on present things being determined by the objects before us, fall not under those indulgences, or excursions, which I am now considering. But I cannot forbear, under this head, to caution pious and tender minds, that are disturbed by the irruptions of wicked imaginations, against too great dejection, and too anxious alarms; for thoughts are only criminal, when they are first chosen, and then voluntarily continued.

> Evil into the mind of God or man
> May come and go, so unapprov'd, and leave
> No spot or stain behind. MILTON.

In futurity chiefly are the snares lodged, by which the imagination is intangled. Futurity is the proper abode of hope and fear, with all their train and progeny of subordinate apprehensions and desires. In futurity events and chances are yet floating at large, without apparent connexion with their causes, and we therefore easily indulge the liberty of gratifying ourselves with a pleasing choice. To pick and cull among possible advantages is, as the civil law terms it, *in vacuum venire*, to take what belongs to nobody; but it has this hazard in it, that we shall be unwilling to quit what we have seized, though an owner should be found. It is easy to think on that which may be gained, till at last we resolve to gain it, and to image the happiness of particular condi-

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tions, till we can be easy in no other. We ought, at least, to let our desires fix upon nothing in another's power for the sake of our quiet, or in another's possession for the sake of our innocence. When a man finds himself led, though by a train of honest sentiments, to wish for that to which he has no right, he should start back as from a pitfal covered with flowers. He that fancies he should benefit the publick more in a great station than the man that fills it, will in time imagine it an act of virtue to supplant him; and as opposition readily kindles into hatred, his eagerness to do that good, to which he is not called, will betray him to crimes, which in his original scheme were never proposed.

He therefore that would govern his actions by the laws of virtue, must regulate his thoughts by those of reason; he must keep guilt from the recesses of his heart, and remember that the pleasures of fancy, and the emotions of desire, are more dangerous as they are more hidden, since they escape the awe of observation, and operate equally in every situation, without the concurrence of external opportunities.

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NUMB. 9. TUESDAY, *April* 17, 1750.

Quod sis esse velis, nihilque malis. MART.

Choose what you are; no other state prefer. ELPHINSTON.

IT is justly remarked by Horace, that howsoever every man may complain occasionally of the hardships of his condition, he is seldom willing to change it for any other on the same level: for whether it be that he, who follows an employment, made choice of it at first on account of its suitableness to his inclination; or that when accident, or the determination of others, have placed him in a particular station, he, by endeavouring to reconcile himself to it, gets the custom of viewing it only on the fairest side; or whether every man thinks that class to which he belongs the most illustrious, merely because he has honoured it with his name; it is certain that, whatever be the reason, most men have a very strong and active prejudice in favour of their own vocation, always working upon their minds, and influencing their behaviour.

This partiality is sufficiently visible in every rank of the human species; but it exerts itself more frequently and with greater force among those who have never learned to conceal their sentiments for reasons of policy, or to model their expressions by the laws of politeness; and therefore the chief contests of wit

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among artificers and handicraftsmen arise from a mutual endeavour to exalt one trade by depreciating another.

From the same principles are derived many consolations to alleviate the inconveniences to which every calling is peculiarly exposed. A blacksmith was lately pleasing himself at his anvil, with observing that, though his trade was hot and sooty, laborious and unhealthy, yet he had the honour of living by his hammer, he got his bread like a man, and if his son should rise in the world, and keep his coach, nobody could reproach him that his father was a tailor.

A man, truly zealous for his fraternity, is never so irresistibly flattered, as when some rival calling is mentioned with contempt. Upon this principle a linen-draper boasted that he had got a new customer, whom he could safely trust, for he could have no doubt of his honesty, since it was known, from unquestionable authority, that he was now filing a bill in chancery to delay payment for the clothes which he had worn the last seven years; and he himself had heard him declare, in a publick coffee-house, that he looked upon the whole generation of woollen-drapers to be such despicable wretches, that no gentleman ought to pay them.

It has been observed that physicians and lawyers are no friends to religion; and many conjectures have been formed to discover the reason of such a combination between men who agree in nothing else, and who seem less to be affected, in their own provinces, by religious opinions, than any other part of the community. The truth is, very few of them have thought

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about religion; but they have all seen a parson; seen him in a habit different from their own, and therefore declared war against him. A young student from the inns of court, who has often attacked the curate of his father's parish with such arguments as his acquaintances could furnish, and returned to town without success, is now gone down with a resolution to destroy him; for he has learned at last how to manage a prig, and if he pretends to hold him again to syllogism, he has a catch in reserve, which neither logick nor metaphysicks can resist.

> I laugh to think how your unshaken Cato
> Will look aghast, when unforeseen destruction
> Pours in upon him thus.

The malignity of soldiers and sailors against each other has been often experienced at the cost of their country; and, perhaps, no orders of men have an enmity of more acrimony, or longer continuance. When, upon our late successes at sea, some new regulations were concerted for establishing the rank of the naval commanders, a captain of foot very acutely remarked, that nothing was more absurd than to give any honorary rewards to seamen, "for honour," says he, "ought only to be won by bravery, and all the world knows that in a sea-fight there is no danger, and therefore no evidence of courage."

But although this general desire of aggrandizing themselves, by raising their profession, betrays men to a thousand ridiculous and mischievous acts of supplantation and detraction, yet as almost all passions have their good as well as bad effects, it like-

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wise excites ingenuity, and sometimes raises an honest and useful emulation of diligence. It may be observed in general, that no trade had ever reached the excellence to which it is now improved, had its professors looked upon it with the eyes of indifferent spectators; the advances, from the first rude essays, must have been made by men who valued themselves for performances, for which scarce any other would be persuaded to esteem them.

It is pleasing to contemplate a manufacture rising gradually from its first mean state by the successive labours of innumerable minds; to consider the first hollow trunk of an oak, in which, perhaps, the shepherd could scarce venture to cross a brook swelled with a shower, enlarged at last into a ship of war, attacking fortresses, terrifying nations, setting storms and billows at defiance, and visiting the remotest parts of the globe. And it might contribute to dispose us to a kinder regard for the labours of one another, if we were to consider from what unpromising beginnings the most useful productions of art have probably arisen. Who, when he saw the first sand or ashes, by a casual intenseness of heat, melted into a metalline form, rugged with excrescences, and clouded with impurities, would have imagined, that in this shapeless lump lay concealed so many conveniences of life, as would in time constitute a great part of the happiness of the world? Yet by some such fortuitous liquefaction was mankind taught to procure a body at once in a high degree solid and transparent, which might admit the light of the sun, and exclude the violence of

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the wind; which might extend the sight of the philosopher to new ranges of existence, and charm him at one time with the unbounded extent of the material creation, and at another with the endless subordination of animal life; and, what is yet of more importance, might supply the decays of nature, and succour old age with subsidiary sight. Thus was the first artificer in glass employed, though without his own knowledge or expectation. He was facilitating and prolonging the enjoyment of light, enlarging the avenues of science, and conferring the highest and most lasting pleasures; he was enabling the student to contemplate nature, and the beauty to behold herself.

This passion for the honour of a profession, like that for the grandeur of our own country, is to be regulated, not extinguished. Every man, from the highest to the lowest station, ought to warm his heart, and animate his endeavours with the hopes of being useful to the world, by advancing the art which it is his lot to exercise, and for that end he must necessarily consider the whole extent of its application, and the whole weight of its importance. But let him not too readily imagine that another is ill employed, because, for want of fuller knowledge of his business, he is not able to comprehend its dignity. Every man ought to endeavour at eminence, not by pulling others down, but by raising himself, and enjoy the pleasure of his own superiority, whether imaginary or real, without interrupting others in the same felicity. The philosopher may very justly be delighted with the extent of his views,

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and the artificer with the readiness of his hands; but let the one remember, that, without mechanical performances, refined speculation is an empty dream, and the other, that, without theoretical reasoning, dexterity is little more than a brute instinct.

NUMB. 10. SATURDAY, *April* 21, 1750.

Posthabui tamen illorum mea seria ludo. VIRG.

For trifling sports I quitted grave affairs.

THE number of correspondents which increases every day upon me, shews that my paper is at least distinguished from the common productions of the press. It is no less a proof of eminence to have many enemies than many friends, and I look upon every letter, whether it contains encomiums or reproaches, as an equal attestation of rising credit. The only pain, which I can feel from my correspondence, is the fear of disgusting those, whose letters I shall neglect; and therefore I take this opportunity of reminding them, that in disapproving their attempts, whenever it may happen, I only return the treatment which I often receive. Besides, many particular motives influence a writer, known only to himself, or his private friends; and it may be justly concluded, that not all letters which are postponed are rejected, nor all that are rejected, critically condemned.

Having thus eased my heart of the only appre-

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hension that sat heavy on it, I can please myself with the candour of Benevolus, who encourages me to proceed, without sinking under the anger of Flirtilla, who quarrels with me for being old and ugly, and for wanting both activity of body, and sprightliness of mind; feeds her monkey with my lucubrations, and refuses any reconciliation till I have appeared in vindication of masquerades. That she may not however imagine me without support, and left to rest wholly upon my own fortitude, I shall now publish some letters which I have received from men as well dressed, and as handsome, as her favourite; and others from ladies, whom I sincerely believe as young, as rich, as gay, as pretty, as fashionable, and as often toasted and treated as herself.

"A SET of candid readers send their respects to the Rambler, and acknowledge his merit in so well beginning a work that may be of publick benefit. But, superior as his genius is to the impertinences of a trifling age, they cannot help a wish that he would condescend to the weakness of minds softened by perpetual amusements, and now and then throw in, like his predecessors, some papers of a gay and humorous turn. Too fair a field now lies open, with too plentiful a harvest of follies! let the cheerful Thalia put in her sickle, and, singing at her work, deck her hair with red and blue."

"A LADY sends her compliments to the Rambler, and desires to know by what other name she may di-

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rect to him; what are his set of friends, his amusements; what his way of thinking, with regard to the living world, and its ways; in short, whether he is a person now alive, and in town? If he be, she will do herself the honour to write to him pretty often, and hopes, from time to time, to be the better for his advice and animadversions; for his animadversions on her neighbours at least. But, if he is a mere essayist, and troubles not himself with the manners of the age, she is sorry to tell him, that even the genius and correctness of an Addison will not secure him from neglect."

No man is so much abstracted from common life, as not to feel a particular pleasure from the regard of the female world; the candid writers of the first billet will not be offended, that my haste to satisfy a lady has hurried their address too soon out of my mind, and that I refer them for a reply to some future paper, in order to tell this curious inquirer after my other name, the answer of a philosopher to a man, who meeting him in the street, desired to see what he carried under his cloak; *I carry it there*, says he, *that you may not see it.* But, though she is never to know my name, she may often see my face; for I am of her opinion, that a diurnal writer ought to view the world, and that he who neglects his contemporaries, may be, with justice, neglected by them.

"Lady Racket sends compliments to the Rambler, and lets him know she shall have cards at her house,

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every Sunday, the remainder of the season, where he will be sure of meeting all the good company in town. By this means she hopes to see his papers interspersed with living characters. She longs to see the torch of truth produced at an assembly, and to admire the charming lustre it will throw on the jewels, complexions, and behaviour of every dear creature there."

It is a rule with me to receive every offer with the same civility as it is made; and, therefore, though lady Racket may have had some reason to guess, that I seldom frequent card-tables on Sundays, I shall not insist upon an exception, which may to her appear of so little force. My business has been to view, as opportunity was offered, every place in which mankind was to be seen; but at card-tables, however brilliant, I have always thought my visit lost, for I could know nothing of the company, but their clothes and their faces. I saw their looks clouded at the beginning of every game with an uniform solicitude, now and then in its progress varied with a short triumph, at one time wrinkled with cunning, at another deadened with despondency, or by accident flushed with rage at the unskilful or unlucky play of a partner. From such assemblies, in whatever humour I happened to enter them, I was quickly forced to retire; they were too trifling for me, when I was grave, and too dull, when I was cheerful.

Yet I cannot but value myself upon this token of regard from a lady who is not afraid to stand before the torch of truth. Let her not, however,

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consult her curiosity more than her prudence; but reflect a moment on the fate of Semele, who might have lived the favourite of Jupiter, if she could have been content without his thunder. It is dangerous for mortal beauty, or terrestrial virtue, to be examined by too strong a light. The torch of truth shews much that we cannot, and all that we would not see. In a face dimpled with smiles, it has often discovered malevolence and envy, and detected under jewels and brocade, the frightful forms of poverty and distress. A fine hand of cards have changed before it into a thousand spectres of sickness, misery, and vexation; and immense sums of money, while the winner counted them with transport, have at the first glimpse of this unwelcome lustre vanished from before him. If her ladyship therefore designs to continue her assembly, I would advise her to shun such dangerous experiments, to satisfy herself with common appearances, and to light up her apartments rather with myrtle, than the torch of truth.

"A MODEST young man sends his service to the author of the Rambler, and will be very willing to assist him in his work, but is sadly afraid of being discouraged by having his first essay rejected, a disgrace he has woefully experienced in every offer he had made of it to every new writer of every new paper; but he comforts himself by thinking, without vanity, that this has been from a peculiar favour of the muses, who saved his performance from being buried in trash, and reserved it to appear with lustre in the Rambler."

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I am equally a friend to modesty and enterprize; and therefore shall think it an honour to correspond with a young man who possesses both in so eminent a degree. Youth is, indeed, the time in which these qualities ought chiefly to be found; modesty suits well with inexperience, and enterprize with health and vigour, and an extensive prospect of life. One of my predecessors has justly observed, that, though modesty has an amiable and winning appearance, it ought not to hinder the exertion of the active powers, but that a man should shew under his blushes a latent resolution. This point of perfection, nice as it is, my correspondent seems to have attained. That he is modest, his own declaration may evince; and, I think, the *latent resolution* may be discovered in his letter by an acute observer. I will advise him, since he so well deserves my precepts, not to be discouraged though the Rambler should prove equally envious, or tasteless, with the rest of this fraternity. If his paper is refused, the presses of England are open, let him try the judgment of the publick. If, as it has sometimes happened in general combinations against merit, he cannot persuade the world to buy his works, he may present them to his friends; and if his friends are seized with the epidemical infatuation, and cannot find his genius, or will not confess it, let him then refer his cause to posterity, and reserve his labours for a wiser age.

Thus have I dispatched some of my correspondents in the usual manner with fair words, and general civility. But to Flirtilla, the gay Flirtilla,

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what shall I reply? Unable as I am to fly, at her command, over land and seas, or to supply her from week to week with the fashions of Paris, or the intrigues of Madrid, I am yet not willing to incur her further displeasure, and would save my papers from her monkey on any reasonable terms. By what propitiation, therefore, may I atone for my former gravity, and open, without trembling, the future letters of this sprightly persecutor? To write in defence of masquerades is no easy task; yet something difficult and daring may well be required, as the price of so important an approbation. I therefore consulted, in this great emergency, a man of high reputation in gay life, who having added to his other accomplishments, no mean proficiency, in the minute philosophy, after the fifth perusal of her letter, broke out with rapture into these words: "And can you, Mr. Rambler, stand out against this charming creature? Let her know at least, that from this moment Nigrinus devotes his life and his labours to her service. Is there any stubborn prejudice of education, that stands between thee and the most amiable of mankind? Behold, Flirtilla, at thy feet, a man grown gray in the study of those noble arts by which right and wrong may be confounded; by which reason may be blinded, when we have a mind to escape from her inspection; and caprice and appetite instated in uncontrouled command, and boundless dominion! Such a casuist may surely engage, with certainty of success, in vindication of an entertainment, which in an instant gives confidence to the timorous, and kin-

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dles ardour in the cold; an entertainment where the vigilance of jealousy has so often been eluded, and the virgin is set free from the necessity of languishing in silence; where all the outworks of chastity are at once demolished; where the heart is laid open without a blush; where bashfulness may survive virtue, and no wish is crushed under the frown of modesty. Far weaker influence than Flirtilla's might gain over an advocate for such amusements. It was declared by Pompey, that if the commonwealth was violated, he could stamp with his foot, and raise an army out of the ground; if the rights of pleasure are again invaded, let but Flirtilla crack her fan, neither pens, nor swords, shall be wanting at the summons; the wit and the colonel shall march out at her command, and neither law nor reason shall stand before us*."

* The four billets in this paper were written by Miss Mulso, afterwards Mrs. Chapone, who survived this work more than half a century, and died Dec. 25, 1801. See an account of her in the Preface to the Adventurer, "British Essayists," vol. 23. C.

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NUMB. 11. TUESDAY, *April* 24, 1750.

Non Dindymene, non adytis quatit
Mentem sacerdotum incola Pythius,
Non Liber æque, non acuta
Sic geminant Corybantes æra,
Tristes ut iræ.——— HOR.

Yet O! remember, nor the god of wine,
Nor Pythian Phœbus from his inmost shrine,
Nor Dindymene, nor her priests possest,
Can with their sounding cymbals shake the breast,
Like furious anger. FRANCIS.

THE maxim which Periander of Corinth, one of the seven sages of Greece, left as a memorial of his knowledge and benevolence, was χόλε κράτει, *Be master of thy anger*. He considered anger as the great disturber of human life, the chief enemy both of publick happiness and private tranquillity, and thought that he could not lay on posterity a stronger obligation to reverence his memory, than by leaving them a salutary caution against this outrageous passion.

To what latitude Periander might extend the word, the brevity of his precept will scarce allow us to conjecture. From anger, in its full import, protracted into malevolence, and exerted in revenge, arise, indeed, many of the evils to which the life of

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man is exposed. By anger operating upon power are produced the subversion of cities, the desolation of countries, the massacre of nations, and all those dreadful and astonishing calamities which fill the histories of the world, and which could not be read at any distant point of time, when the passions stand neutral, and every motive and principle is left to its natural force, without some doubt of the truth of the relation, did we not see the same causes still tending to the same effects, and only acting with less vigour for want of the same concurrent opportunities.

But this gigantick and enormous species of anger falls not properly under the animadversion of a writer, whose chief end is the regulation of common life, and whose precepts are to recommend themselves by their general use. Nor is this essay intended to expose the tragical or fatal effects even of private malignity. The anger which I propose now for my subject, is such as makes those who indulge it more troublesome than formidable, and ranks them rather with hornets and wasps, than with basilisks and lions. I have, therefore, prefixed a motto, which characterises this passion, not so much by the mischief that it causes, as by the noise that it utters.

There is in the world a certain class of mortals, known, and contentedly known, by the appellation of *passionate men*, who imagine themselves entitled by that distinction to be provoked on every slight occasion, and to vent their rage in vehement and fierce vociferations, in furious menaces and licentious reproaches. Their rage, indeed, for the most part, fumes away in outcries of injury, and protes-

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tations of vengeance, and seldom proceeds to actual violence, unless a drawer or linkboy falls in their way; but they interrupt the quiet of those that happen to be within the reach of their clamours, obstruct the course of conversation, and disturb the enjoyment of society.

Men of this kind are sometimes not without understanding or virtue, and are, therefore, not always treated with the severity which their neglect of the ease of all about them might justly provoke; they have obtained a kind of prescription for their folly, and are considered by their companions as under a predominant influence that leaves them not masters of their conduct or language, as acting without consciousness, and rushing into mischief with a mist before their eyes; they are therefore pitied rather than censured, and their sallies are passed over as the involuntary blows of a man agitated by the spasms of a convulsion.

It is surely not to be observed without indignation, that men may be found of minds mean enough to be satisfied with this treatment; wretches who are proud to obtain the privilege of madmen, and can, without shame, and without regret, consider themselves as receiving hourly pardons from their companions, and giving them continual opportunities of exercising their patience, and boasting their clemency.

Pride is undoubtedly the original of anger; but pride, like every other passion, if it once breaks loose from reason, counteracts its own purposes. A passionate man, upon the review of his day, will have very few gratifications to offer to his pride,

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when he has considered how his outrages were caused, why they were borne, and in what they are likely to end at last.

Those sudden bursts of rage generally break out upon small occasions; for life, unhappy as it is, cannot supply great evils as frequently as the man of fire thinks it fit to be enraged; therefore the first reflection upon his violence must shew him that he is mean enough to be driven from his post by every petty incident, that he is the mere slave of casualty, and that his reason and virtue are in the power of the wind.

One motive there is of these loud extravagancies, which a man is careful to conceal from others, and does not always discover to himself. He that finds his knowledge narrow, and his arguments weak, and by consequence his suffrage not much regarded, is sometimes in hope of gaining that attention by his clamours which he cannot otherwise obtain, and is pleased with remembering that at least he made himself heard, that he had the power to interrupt those whom he could not confute, and suspend the decision which he could not guide.

Of this kind is the fury to which many men give way among their servants and domesticks; they feel their own ignorance, they see their own insignificance; and therefore they endeavour, by their fury, to fright away contempt from before them, when they know it must follow them behind; and think themselves eminently masters, when they see one folly tamely complied with, only lest refusal or delay should provoke them to a greater.

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These temptations cannot but be owned to have some force. It is so little pleasing to any man to see himself wholly overlooked in the mass of things, that he may be allowed to try a few expedients for procuring some kind of supplemental dignity, and use some endeavour to add weight, by the violence of his temper, to the lightness of his other powers. But this has now been long practised, and found, upon the most exact estimate, not to produce advantages equal to its inconveniences; for it appears not that a man can by uproar, tumult, and bluster, alter any one's opinion of his understanding, or gain influence, except over those whom fortune or nature have made his dependants. He may, by a steady perseverance in his ferocity, fright his children, and harass his servants, but the rest of the world will look on and laugh; and he will have the comfort at last of thinking, that he lives only to raise contempt and hatred, emotions to which wisdom and virtue would be always unwilling to give occasion. He has contrived only to make those fear him, whom every reasonable being is endeavouring to endear by kindness, and must content himself with the pleasure of a triumph obtained by trampling on them who could not resist. He must perceive that the apprehension which his presence causes is not the awe of his virtue, but the dread of his brutality, and that he has given up the felicity of being loved, without gaining the honour of being reverenced.

But this is not the only ill consequence of the frequent indulgence of this blustering passion, which a man, by often calling to his assistance will teach, in

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a short time, to intrude before the summons, to rush upon him with resistless violence, and without any previous notice of its approach. He will find himself liable to be inflamed at the first touch of provocation; and unable to retain his resentment till he has a full conviction of the offence, to proportion his anger to the cause, or to regulate it by prudence or by duty. When a man has once suffered his mind to be thus vitiated, he becomes one of the most hateful and unhappy beings. He can give no security to himself that he shall not, at the next interview, alienate by some sudden transport his dearest friend; or break out, upon some slight contradiction, into such terms of rudeness as can never be perfectly forgotten. Whoever converses with him, lives with the suspicion and solicitude of a man that plays with a tame tiger, always under a necessity of watching the moment in which the capricious savage shall begin to growl.

It is told by Prior, in a panegyrick on the earl of Dorset, that his servants used to put themselves in his way when he was angry, because he was sure to recompense them for any indignities which he made them suffer. This is the round of a passionate man's life; he contracts debts when he is furious, which his virtue, if he has virtue, obliges him to discharge at the return of reason. He spends his time in outrage and acknowledgment, injury and reparation. Or, if there be any who hardens himself in oppression, and justifies the wrong, because he has done it, his insensibility can make small part of his praise, or his happiness; he only adds deliberate to hasty folly, aggra-

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vates petulance by contumacy, and destroys the only plea that he can offer for the tenderness and patience of mankind.

Yet, even this degree of depravity we may be content to pity, because it seldom wants a punishment equal to its guilt. Nothing is more despicable or more miserable than the old age of a passionate man. When the vigour of youth fails him, and his amusements pall with frequent repetition, his occasional rage sinks by decay of strength into peevishness; that peevishness, for want of novelty and variety, becomes habitual; the world falls off from around him, and he is left, as Homer expresses it φθινύθων φίλον κῆρ, to devour his own heart in solitude and contempt.

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NUMB. 12. SATURDAY, *April* 28, 1750.

——Miserum parva stipe focilat, ut pudibundos
Exercere sales inter convivia possit.——
———Tu mitis, & acri
Asperitate carens, positoque per omnia fastu,
Inter ut æquales unus numeraris amicos,
Obsequiumque doces, & amorem quæris amando.

Lucanus *ad* Pisonem.

Unlike the ribald whose licentious jest
Pollutes his banquet, and insults his guest;
From wealth and grandeur easy to descend,
Thou joy'st to lose the master in the friend:
We round thy board the cheerful menials see,
Gay with the smile of bland equality;
No social care the gracious lord disdains;
Love prompts to love, and rev'rence rev'rence gains.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As you seem to have devoted your labours to virtue, I cannot forbear to inform you of one species of cruelty with which the life of a man of letters perhaps does not often make him acquainted; and which, as it seems to produce no other advantage to those that practise it than a short gratification of thoughtless vanity, may become less common when it has been once exposed in its various forms, and its full magnitude.

I am the daughter of a country gentleman, whose family is numerous, and whose estate, not at first sufficient to supply us with affluence, has been

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lately so much impaired by an unsuccessful law-suit, that all the younger children are obliged to try such means as their education affords them, for procuring the necessaries of life. Distress and curiosity concurred to bring me to London, where I was received by a relation with the coldness which misfortune generally finds. A week, a long week, I lived with my cousin, before the most vigilant inquiry could procure us the least hopes of a place, in which time I was much better qualified to bear all the vexations of servitude. The first two days she was content to pity me, and only wished I had not been quite so well bred; but people must comply with their circumstances. This lenity, however, was soon at an end; and, for the remaining part of the week, I heard every hour of the pride of my family, the obstinacy of my father, and of people better born than myself that were common servants.

At last, on Saturday noon, she told me, with very visible satisfaction, that Mrs. Bombasine, the great silk-mercer's lady, wanted a maid, and a fine place it would be, for there would be nothing to do but to clean my mistress's room, get up her linen, dress the young ladies, wait at tea in the morning, take care of a little miss just come from nurse, and then sit down to my needle. But madam was a woman of great spirit, and would not be contradicted, and therefore I should take care, for good places were not easily to be got.

With these cautions I waited on madam Bombasine, of whom the first sight gave me no ravishing ideas. She was two yards round the waist, her voice

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was at once loud and squeaking, and her face brought to my mind the picture of the full moon. Are you the young woman, says she, that are come to offer yourself? It is strange when people of substance want a servant, how soon it is the town-talk. But they know they shall have a belly-full that live with me. Not like people at the other end of the town; we dine at one o'clock. But I never take any body without a character; what friends do you come of? I then told her that my father was a gentleman, and that we had been unfortunate.—A great misfortune indeed, to come to me, and have three meals a-day! —So your father was a gentleman, and you are a gentlewoman I suppose—such gentlewomen!—Madam, I did not mean to claim any exemptions, I only answered your inquiry—Such gentlewomen! people should set their children to good trades, and keep them off the parish. Pray go to the other end of the town, there are gentlewomen, if they would pay their debts: I am sure we have lost enough by gentlewomen. Upon this, her broad face grew broader with triumph, and I was afraid she would have taken me for the pleasure of continuing her insult; but happily the next word was, Pray, Mrs. gentlewoman, troop down stairs.—You may believe I obeyed her.

I returned and met with a better reception from my cousin than I expected; for while I was out, she had heard that Mrs. Standish, whose husband had lately been raised from a clerk in an office, to be commissioner of the excise, had taken a fine house, and wanted a maid.

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To Mrs. Standish I went, and, after having waited six hours, was at last admitted to the top of the stairs, when she came out of her room, with two of her company. There was a smell of punch. So, young woman, you want a place; whence do you come?—From the country, madam.—Yes, they all come out of the country. And what brought you to town, a bastard? Where do you lodge? At the Seven-Dials? What, you never heard of the foundling-house! Upon this, they all laughed so obstreperously, that I took the opportunity of sneaking off in the tumult.

I then heard of a place at an elderly lady's. She was at cards; but in two hours, I was told, she would speak to me. She asked me if I could keep an account, and ordered me to write. I wrote two lines out of some book that lay by her. She wondered what people meant, to breed up poor girls to write at that rate. I suppose, Mrs. Flirt, if I was to see your work, it would be fine stuff!—You may walk. I will not have love-letters written from my house to every young fellow in the street.

Two days after, I went on the same pursuit to Lady Lofty, dressed as I was directed, in what little ornaments I had, because she had lately got a place at court. Upon the first sight of me, she turns to the woman that shewed me in, Is this the lady that wants a place? Pray what place would you have, miss? a maid of honour's place? Servants now a-days!—Madam, I heard you wanted —Wanted what? Somebody finer than myself? A pretty servant indeed—I should be afraid to speak to her—I suppose, Mrs. Minx, these fine hands

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cannot bear wetting—A servant indeed! Pray move off—I am resolved to be the head person in this house—You are ready dressed, the taverns will be open.

I went to inquire for the next place in a clean linen gown, and heard the servant tell his lady, there was a young woman, but he saw she would not do. I was brought up, however. Are you the trollop that has the impudence to come for my place? What, you have hired that nasty gown, and are come to steal a better!—Madam, I have another, but being obliged to walk—Then these are your manners, with your blushes, and your courtesies, to come to me in your worst gown. Madam, give me leave to wait upon you in my other. Wait on me, you saucy slut! Then you are sure of coming—I could not let such a drab come near me—Here, you girl, that came up with her, have you touched her? If you have, wash your hands before you dress me—Such trollops! Get you down. What, whimpering? Pray walk.

I went away with tears; for my cousin had lost all patience. However, she told me, that having a respect for my relations, she was willing to keep me out of the street, and would let me have another week.

The first day of this week I saw two places. At one I was asked where I had lived? And upon my answer, was told by the lady, that people should qualify themselves in ordinary places, for she should never have done if she was to follow girls about. At the other house I was a smirking hussy, and that sweet face I might make money of—For

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her part, it was a rule with her never to take any creature that thought herself handsome.

The three next days were spent in Lady Bluff's entry, where I waited six hours every day for the pleasure of seeing the servants peep at me, and go away laughing. – Madam will stretch her small shanks in the entry; she will know the house again.—At sunset the two first days I was told, that my lady would see me to-morrow, and on the third, that her woman staid.

My week was now near its end, and I had no hopes of a place. My relation, who always laid upon me the blame of every miscarriage, told me that I must learn to humble myself, and that all great ladies had particular ways; that if I went on in that manner, she could not tell who would keep me; she had known many that had refused places, sell their clothes, and beg in the streets.

It was to no purpose that the refusal was declared by me to be never on my side; I was reasoning against interest, and against stupidity; and therefore I comforted myself with the hope of succeeding better in my next attempt, and went to Mrs. Courtly, a very fine lady, who had routes at her house, and saw the best company in town.

I had not waited two hours before I was called up, and found Mr. Courtly and his lady at piquet, in the height of good humour. This I looked on as a favourable sign, and stood at the lower end of the room, in expectation of the common questions. At last Mr. Courtly called out, after a whisper, Stand facing the light, that one may see you. I changed my

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place, and blushed. They frequently turned their eyes upon me, and seemed to discover many subjects of merriment; for at every look they whispered, and laughed with the most violent agitations of delight. At last Mr. Courtly cried out, Is that colour your own, child? Yes, says the lady, if she has not robbed the kitchen hearth. This was so happy a conceit, that it renewed the storm of laughter, and they threw down their cards in hopes of better sport. The lady then called me to her, and began with an affected gravity to inquire what I could do? But first turn about, and let us see your fine shape: Well, what are you fit for, Mrs. Mum? You would find your tongue, I suppose in the kitchen. No, no, says Mr. Courtly, the girl's a good girl yet, but I am afraid a brisk young fellow, with fine tags on his shoulder——Come, child, hold up your head; what? you have stole nothing.——Not yet, says the lady, but she hopes to steal your heart quickly.—Here was a laugh of happiness and triumph, prolonged by the confusion which I could no longer repress. At last the lady recollected herself; Stole! no—but if I had her, I should watch her: for that down-cast eye—Why cannot you look people in the face? Steal! says her husband, she would steal nothing but, perhaps, a few ribands before they were left off by her lady. Sir, answered I, why should you, by supposing me a thief, insult one from whom you have received no injury? Insult! says the lady; are you come here to be a servant, you saucy baggage, and talk of insulting? What will this world come to, if a gentleman may not

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jest with a servant! Well, such servants! pray be gone, and see when you will have the honour to be so insulted again. Servants insulted!—a fine time. —Insulted! Get down stairs, you slut, or the footman shall insult you.

The last day of the last week was now coming, and my kind cousin talked of sending me down in the waggon to preserve me from bad courses. But in the morning she came and told me that she had one trial more for me; Euphemia wanted a maid, and perhaps I might do for her; for, like me, she must fall her crest, being forced to lay down her chariot upon the loss of half her fortune by bad securities, and with her way of giving her money to every body that pretended to want it, she could have little beforehand; therefore I might serve her; for, with all her fine sense, she must not pretend to be nice.

I went immediately, and met at the door a young gentlewoman, who told me she had herself been hired that morning, but that she was ordered to bring any that offered up stairs. I was accordingly introduced to Euphemia, who, when I came in, laid down her book, and told me, that she sent for me not to gratify an idle curiosity, but lest my disappointment might be made still more grating by incivility; that she was in pain to deny any thing, much more what was no favour; that she saw nothing in my appearance which did not make her wish for my company; but that another, whose claims might perhaps be equal, had come before me. The thought of being so near to such a place, and missing it, brought tears into my eyes, and my sobs hindered me from returning

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my acknowledgments. She rose up confused, and supposing by my concern that I was distressed, placed me by her, and made me tell her my story: which when she had heard, she put two guineas in my hand, ordering me to lodge near her, and make use of her table till she could provide for me. I am now under her protection, and know not how to shew my gratitude better than by giving this account to the RAMBLER.

ZOSIMA.

NUMB. 13. TUESDAY, *May* 1, 1750.

Commissumque teges et vino tortus et irâ. HOR.

And let not wine or anger wrest
Th' intrusted secret from your breast. FRANCIS.

IT is related by Quintus Curtius, that the Persians always conceived an invincible contempt of a man who had violated the laws of secrecy; for they thought, that, however he might be deficient in the qualities requisite to actual excellence, the negative virtues at least were in his power, and though he perhaps could not speak well if he was to try, it was still easy for him not to speak.

In forming this opinion of the easiness of secrecy, they seem to have considered it as opposed, not to treachery, but loquacity, and to have conceived the man whom they thus censured, not frighted by menaces to reveal, or bribed by promises to betray, but incited by the mere pleasure of talking, or some

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other motive equally trifling, to lay open his heart without reflection, and to let whatever he knew slip from him, only for want of power to retain it. Whether, by their settled and avowed scorn of thoughtless talkers, the Persians were able to diffuse to any great extent the virtue of taciturnity, we are hindered by the distance of those times from being able to discover, there being very few memoirs remaining of the court of Persepolis, nor any distinct accounts handed down to us of their office-clerks, their ladies of the bedchamber, their attorneys, their chambermaids, or their footmen.

In these latter ages, though the old animosity against a prattler is still retained, it appears wholly to have lost its effect upon the conduct of mankind, for secrets are so seldom kept, that it may with some reason be doubted whether the ancients were not mistaken in their first postulate, whether the quality of retention be so generally bestowed, and whether a secret has not some subtle volatility, by which it escapes imperceptibly at the smallest vent, or some power of fermentation, by which it expands itself so as to burst the heart that will not give it way.

Those that study either the body or the mind of a man, very often find the most specious and pleasing theory falling under the weight of contrary experience; and instead of gratifying their vanity by inferring effects from causes, they are always reduced at last to conjecture causes from effects. That it is easy to be secret, the speculatist can demonstrate in his retreat, and therefore thinks himself justified in placing confidence; the man of the world knows,

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that, whether difficult or not, it is uncommon, and therefore finds himself rather inclined to search after the reason of this universal failure in one of the most important duties of society.

The vanity of being known to be trusted with a secret, is generally one of the chief motives to disclose it; for, however absurd it may be thought to boast an honour by an act which shews that it was conferred without merit, yet most men seem rather inclined to confess the want of virtue than of importance, and more willingly shew their influence, though at the expence of their probity, than glide through life with no other pleasure than the private consciousness of fidelity; which, while it is preserved, must be without praise, except from the single person who tries and knows it.

There are many ways of telling a secret, by which a man exempts himself from the reproaches of his conscience, and gratifies his pride, without suffering himself to believe that he impairs his virtue. He tells the private affairs of his patron, or his friend, only to those from whom he would not conceal his own; he tells them to those, who have no temptation to betray the trust, or with a denunciation of a certain forfeiture of his friendship, if he discovers that they become publick.

Secrets are very frequently told in the first ardour of kindness, or of love, for the sake of proving, by so important a sacrifice, sincerity or tenderness; but with this motive, though it be strong in itself, vanity concurs, since every man desires to be most esteemed by those whom he loves, or with whom he

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converses, with whom he passes his hours of pleasure, and to whom he retires from business and from care.

When the discovery of secrets is under consideration, there is always a distinction carefully to be made between our own and those of another; those of which we are fully masters, as they affect only our own interest, and those which are reposited with us in trust, and involve the happiness or convenience of such as we have no right to expose to hazard. To tell our own secrets is generally folly, but that folly is without guilt; to communicate those with which we are intrusted is always treachery, and treachery for the most part combined with folly.

There have, indeed, been some enthusiastic and irrational zealots for friendship, who have maintained, and perhaps believed, that one friend has a right to all that is in possession of another; and that therefore it is a violation of kindness to exempt any secret from this boundless confidence. Accordingly a late female minister of state* has been shameless enough to inform the world, that she used, when she wanted to extract any thing from her sovereign, to remind her of Montaigne's reasoning, who has determined, that to tell a secret to a friend is no breach of fidelity, because the number of persons trusted is not multiplied, a man and his friend being virtually the same.

That such a fallacy could be imposed upon any human understanding, or that an author could have advanced a position so remote from truth and reason, any other ways than as a declaimer, to shew

* Sarah duchess of Marlbrough. *C.*

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to what extent he could stretch his imagination, and with what strength he could press his principle, would scarcely have been credible, had not this lady kindly shewn us how far weakness may be deluded, or indolence amused. But since it appears, that even this sophistry has been able, with the help of a strong desire, to repose in quiet upon the understanding of another, to mislead honest intentions, and an understanding not contemptible*, it may not be superfluous to remark, that those things which are common among friends are only such as either possesses in his own right, and can alienate or destroy without injury to any other person. Without this limitation confidence must run on without end, the second person may tell the secret to the third, upon the same principle as he received it from the first, and a third may hand it forward to a fourth, till at last it is told in the round of friendship to them from whom it was the first intention to conceal it.

The confidence which Caius has of the faithfulness of Titius is nothing more than an opinion which himself cannot know to be true, and which Claudius, who first tells his secret to Caius, may know to be false; and therefore the trust is transferred by Caius, if he reveal what has been told him, to one from whom the person originally concerned would have withheld it: and whatever may be the event, Caius has hazarded the happiness of his friend, without necessity and without permission, and has put that trust in the hand of fortune, which was given only to virtue.

* That of Queen Anne.

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All the arguments upon which a man who is telling the private affairs of another may ground his confidence of security, he must upon reflection know to be uncertain, because he finds them without effect upon himself. When he is imagining that Titius will be cautious, from a regard to his interest, his reputation, or his duty, he ought to reflect that he is himself at that instant acting in opposition to all these reasons, and revealing what interest, reputation, and duty, direct him to conceal.

Every one feels that in his own case he should consider the man incapable of trust, who believed himself at liberty to tell whatever he knew to the first whom he should conclude deserving of his confidence; therefore Caius, in admitting Titius to the affairs imparted only to himself, must know that he violates his faith, since he acts contrary to the intention of Claudius, to whom that faith was given. For promises of friendship are, like all others, useless and vain, unless they are made in some known sense, adjusted and acknowledged by both parties.

I am not ignorant that many questions may be started relating to the duty of secrecy, where the affairs are of publick concern; where subsequent reasons may arise to alter the appearance and nature of the trust; that the manner in which the secret was told may change the degree of obligation, and that the principles upon which a man is chosen for a confidant may not always equally constrain him. But these scruples, if not too intricate, are of too extensive consideration for my present purpose, nor are they such as generally occur in

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common life; and though casuistical knowledge be useful in proper hands, yet it ought by no means to be carelessly exposed, since most will use it rather to lull than to awaken their own consciences; and the threads of reasoning, on which truth is suspended, are frequently drawn to such subtility, that common eyes cannot perceive, and common sensibility cannot feel them.

The whole doctrine, as well as practice of secrecy, is so perplexing and dangerous, that next to him who is compelled to trust, I think him unhappy who is chosen to be trusted; for he is often involved in scruples without the liberty of calling in the help of any other understanding; he is frequently drawn into guilt, under the appearance of friendship and honesty; and sometimes subjected to suspicion by the treachery of others, who are engaged without his knowledge in the same schemes; for he that has one confidant has generally more, and when he is at last betrayed, is in doubt on whom he shall fix the crime.

(The rules therefore that I shall propose concerning secrecy, and from which I think it not safe to deviate, without long and exact deliberation, are—Never to solicit the knowledge of a secret. Not willingly, nor without many limitations, to accept such confidence when it is offered. When a secret is once admitted, to consider the trust as of a very high nature, important as society, and sacred as truth, and therefore not to be violated for any incidental convenience, or slight appearance of contrary fitness.)

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NUMB. 14. SATURDAY, *May* 5, 1750.

——— *Nil fuit unquam*
Sic dispar sibi ——— HOR.

Sure such a various creature ne'er was known. FRANCIS.

AMONG the many inconsistencies which folly produces, or infirmity suffers, in the human mind, there has often been observed a manifest and striking contrariety between the life of an author and his writings; and Milton, in a letter to a learned stranger, by whom he had been visited, with great reason congratulates himself upon the consciousness of being found equal to his own character, and having preserved, in a private and familiar interview, that reputation which his works had procured him.

Those whom the appearance of virtue, or the evidence of genius, have tempted to a nearer knowledge of the writer in whose performances they may be found, have indeed had frequent reason to repent their curiosity; the bubble that sparkled before them has become common water at the touch; the phantom of perfection has vanished when they wished to press it to their bosom. They have lost the pleasure of imagining how far humanity may be exalted, and, perhaps, felt themselves less inclined to toil up the steeps of virtue, when they observe those who seem best able to point the way, loitering below, as either afraid of the labour, or doubtful of the reward.

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It has been long the custom of the oriental monarchs to hide themselves in gardens and palaces, to avoid the conversation of mankind, and to be known to their subjects only by their edicts. The same policy is no less necessary to him that writes, than to him that governs; for men would not more patiently submit to be taught, than commanded, by one known to have the same follies and weaknesses with themselves. A sudden intruder into the closet of an author would perhaps feel equal indignation with the officer, who having long solicited admission into the presence of Sardanapalus, saw him not consulting upon laws, inquiring into grievances, or modelling armies, but employed in feminine amusements, and directing the ladies in their work.

It is not difficult to conceive, however, that for many reasons a man writes much better than he lives. For without entering into refined speculations, it may be shewn much easier to design than to perform. A man proposes his schemes of life in a state of abstraction and disengagement, exempt from the enticements of hope, the solicitations of affection, the importunities of appetite, or the depressions of fear, and is in the same state with him that teaches upon land the art of navigation, to whom the sea is always smooth, and the wind always prosperous.

The mathematicians are well acquainted with the difference between pure science, which has to do only with ideas, and the application of its laws to the use of life, in which they are constrained to submit to the imperfection of matter and the influence

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of accidents, Thus, in moral discussions, it is to be remembered that many impediments obstruct our practice, which very easily give way to theory. The speculatist is only in danger of erroneous reasoning; but the man involved in life, has his own passions, and those of others, to encounter, and is embarrassed with a thousand inconveniencies, which confound him with variety of impulse, and either perplex or obstruct his way. He is forced to act without deliberation, and obliged to chuse before he can examine: he is surprised by sudden alterations of the state of things, and changes his measures according to superficial appearances; he is led by others, either because he is indolent, or because he is timorous; he is sometimes afraid to know what is right, and sometimes finds friends or enemies diligent to deceive him.

We are, therefore, not to wonder that most fail, amidst tumult, and snares, and danger, in the observance of those precepts, which they lay down in solitude, safety, and tranquillity, with a mind unbiassed, and with liberty unobstructed. It is the condition of our present state to see more than we can attain; the exactest vigilance and caution can never maintain a single day of unmingled innocence, much less can the utmost efforts of incorporated mind reach the summit of speculative virtue.

It is, however, necessary for the idea of perfection to be proposed, that we may have some object to which our endeavours are to be directed; and he that is most deficient in the duties of life, makes

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some atonement for his faults, if he warns others against his own failings, and hinders, by the salubrity of his admonitions, the contagion of his example.

Nothing is more unjust, however common, than to charge with hypocrisy him that expresses zeal for those virtues which he neglects to practise; since he may be sincerely convinced of the advantages of conquering his passions, without having yet obtained the victory, as a man may be confident of the advantages of a voyage, or a journey, without having courage or industry to undertake it, and may honestly recommend to others, those attempts which he neglects himself.

The interest which the corrupt part of mankind have in hardening themselves against every motive to amendment, has disposed them to give to these contradictions, when they can be produced against the cause of virtue, that weight which they will not allow them in any other case. They see men act in opposition to their interest, without supposing, that they do not know it; those who give way to the sudden violence of passion, and forsake the most important pursuits for petty pleasures, are not supposed to have changed their opinions, or to approve their own conduct. In moral or religious questions alone, they determine the sentiments by the actions, and charge every man with endeavouring to impose upon the world, whose writings are not confirmed by his life. They never consider that themselves neglect or practise something every day inconsistently with their own settled judgment, nor discover that the conduct of the advocates for virtue can little

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increase, or lessen, the obligations of their dictates; argument is to be invalidated only by argument, and is in itself of the same force, whether or not it convinces him by whom it is proposed.

Yet since this prejudice, however unreasonable, is always likely to have some prevalence, it is the duty of every man to take care lest he should hinder the efficacy of his own instructions. When he desires to gain the belief of others, he should shew that he believes himself; and when he teaches the fitness of virtue by his reasonings, he should, by his example, prove its possibility: Thus much at least may be required of him, that he shall not act worse than others because he writes better, nor imagine that, by the merit of his genius, he may claim indulgence beyond mortals of the lower classes, and be excused for want of prudence, or neglect of virtue.

Bacon, in his history of the winds, after having offered something to the imagination as desirable, often proposes lower advantages in its place to the reason as attainable. The same method may be sometimes pursued in moral endeavours, which this philosopher has observed in natural inquiries; having first set positive and absolute excellence before us, we may be pardoned though we sink down to humbler virtue, trying, however, to keep our point always in view, and struggling not to lose ground, though we cannot gain it.

It is recorded of Sir Mathew Hale, that he, for a long time, concealed the consecration of himself to the stricter duties of religion, lest by some

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flagitious and shameful action, he should bring piety in disgrace. For the same reason it may be prudent for a writer, who apprehends that he shall not inforce his own maxims by his domestick character, to conceal his name, that he may not injure them.

There are, indeed, a great number whose curiosity to gain a more familiar knowledge of successful writers, is not so much prompted by an opinion of their power to improve as to delight, and who expect from them not arguments against vice or dissertations on temperance or justice, but flights of wit, and sallies of pleasantry, or, at least, acute remarks, nice distinctions, justness of sentiment, and elegance of diction.

This expectation is, indeed, specious and probable, and yet, such is the fate of all human hopes, that it is very often frustrated, and those who raise admiration by their books, disgust by their company. A man of letters for the most part spends in the privacies of study, that season of life in which the manners are to be softened into ease, and polished into elegance; and, when he has gained knowledge enough to be respected, has neglected the minuter acts by which he might have pleased. When he enters life, if his temper be soft and timorous, he is diffident and bashful, from the knowledge of his defects; or if he was born with spirit and resolution, he is ferocious and arrogant, from the consciousness of his merit; he is either dissipated by the awe of company, and unable to recollect his reading, and arrange his arguments; or he is hot and dogmatical, quick in opposition, and tenacious in defence, dis-

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abled by his own violence, and confused by his haste to triumph.

The graces of writing and conversation are of different kinds, and though he who excels in one might have been, with opportunities and application, equally successful in the other, yet as many please by extemporary talk, though utterly unacquainted with the more accurate method, and more laboured beauties, which composition requires; so it is very possible that men, wholly accustomed to works of study, may be without that readiness of conception, and affluence of language, always necessary to colloquial entertainment. They may want address to watch the hints which conversation offers for the display of their particular attainments, or they may be so much unfurnished with matter on common subjects, that discourse not professedly literary, glides over them as heterogeneous bodies, without admitting their conceptions to mix in the circulation.

A transition from an authour's book to his conversation, is too often like an entrance into a large city, after a distant prospect. Remotely, we see nothing but spires of temples and turrets of palaces, and imagine it the residence of splendour, grandeur and magnificence; but, when we have passed the gates, we find it perplexed with narrow passages, disgraced with despicable cottages, embarrassed with obstructions, and clouded with smoke.

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NUMB. 15. TUESDAY, *May* 8, 1750.

Et quando uberior vitiorum copia? Quando
Major avaritiæ patuit sinus? Alea quando
Hos animos? JUV.

What age so large a crop of vices bore,
Or when was avarice extended more?
When were the dice with more profusion thrown?
DRYDEN.

THERE is no grievance, publick or private, of which, since I took upon me the office of a periodical monitor, I have received so many, or so earnest complaints, as of the predominance of play; of a fatal passion for cards and dice, which seems to have overturned, not only the ambition of excellence, but the desire of pleasure; to have extinguished the flames of the lover, as well as of the patriot; and threatens, in its further progress, to destroy all distinctions, both of rank and sex, to crush all emulation but that of fraud, to corrupt all those classes of our people, whose ancestors have, by their virtue, their industry, or their parsimony, given them the power of living in extravagance, idleness, and vice, and to leave them without knowledge, but of the modish games, and without wishes, but for lucky hands.

I have found by long experience, that there are few enterprises so hopeless as contests with the fashion, in which the opponents are not only made confident by their numbers, and strong by their

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union, but are hardened by contempt of their antagonist, whom they always look upon as a wretch of low notions, contracted views, mean conversation, and narrow fortune, who envies the elevations which he cannot reach, who would gladly imbitter the happiness which his inelegance or indigence deny him to partake, and who has no other end in his advice than to revenge his own mortification by hindering those, whom their birth and taste have set above him, from the enjoyment of their superiority, and bringing them down to a level with himself.

Though I have never found myself much affected by this formidable censure, which I have incurred often enough to be acquainted with its full force, yet I shall, in some measure, obviate it on this occasion, by offering very little in my own name, either of argument or intreaty, since those who suffer by this general infatuation may be supposed best able to relate its effects.

SIR,

THERE seems to be so little knowledge left in the world, and so little of that reflection practised, by which knowledge is to be gained, that I am in doubt, whether I shall be understood, when I complain of want of opportunity for thinking; or whether a condemnation, which at present seems irreversible, to perpetual ignorance, will raise any compassion, either in you, or your readers: yet I will venture to lay my state before you, because I believe it is natural, to most minds, to take some pleasure in complaining of evils, of which they have no reason to be ashamed.

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I am the daughter of a man of great fortune, whose diffidence of mankind, and, perhaps, the pleasure of continual accumulation, incline him to reside upon his own estate, and to educate his children in his own house, where I was bred, if not with the most brilliant examples of virtue before my eyes, at least remote enough from any incitements to vice; and wanting neither leisure nor books, nor the acquaintance of some persons of learning in the neighbourhood, I endeavoured to acquire such knowledge as might most recommend me to esteem, and thought myself able to support a conversation upon most of the subjects, which my sex and condition made it proper for me to understand.

I had, besides my knowledge, as my mamma and my maid told me, a very fine face, and elegant shape, and with all these advantages had been seventeen months the reigning toast for twelve miles round, and never came to the monthly assembly, but I heard the old ladies that sat by wishing that *it might end well*, and their daughters criticising my air, my features, or my dress.

You know, Mr. Rambler, that ambition is natural to youth, and curiosity to understanding, and therefore will hear, without wonder, that I was desirous to extend my victories over those who might give more honour to the conqueror; and that I found in a country life a continual repetition of the same pleasures, which was not sufficient to fill up the mind for the present, or raise any expectations of the future; and I will confess to you, that I was impatient for a sight of the town, and filled my thoughts with

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the discoveries which I should make, the triumphs that I should obtain, and the praises that I should receive.

At last the time came. My aunt, whose husband has a seat in parliament, and a place at court, buried her only child, and sent for me to supply the loss. The hope that I should so far insinuate myself into their favour, as to obtain a considerable augmentation of my fortune, procured me every convenience for my departure, with great expedition; and I could not, amidst all my transports, forbear some indignation to see with what readiness the natural guardians of my virtue sold me to a state, which they thought more hazardous than it really was, as soon as a new accession of fortune glittered in their eyes.

Three days I was upon the road, and on the fourth morning my heart danced at the sight of London. I was set down at my aunt's, and entered upon the scene of action. I expected now, from the age and experience of my aunt, some prudential lessons; but, after the first civilities and first tears were over, was told what pity it was to have kept so fine a girl so long in the country; for the people who did not begin young, seldom dealt their cards handsomely, or played them tolerably.

Young persons are commonly inclined to slight the remarks and counsels of their elders. I smiled, perhaps, with too much contempt, and was upon the point of telling her that my time had not been passed in such trivial attainments. But I soon found that things are to be estimated, not by the

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importance of their effects, but the frequency of their use.

A few days after, my aunt gave me notice, that some company, which she had been six weeks in collecting, was to meet that evening, and she expected a finer assembly than had been seen all the winter. She expressed this in the jargon of a gamester, and, when I asked an explication of her terms of art, wondered where I had lived. I had already found my aunt so incapable of any rational conclusion, and so ignorant of every thing, whether great or little, that I had lost all regard to her opinion, and dressed myself with great expectations of an opportunity to display my charms among rivals, whose competition would not dishonour me. The company came in, and after the cursory compliments of salutation, alike easy to the lowest and the highest understanding, what was the result? The cards were broke open, the parties were formed, the whole night passed in a game, upon which the young and old were equally employed; nor was I able to attract an eye, or gain an ear, but being compelled to play without skill, I perpetually embarrassed my partner, and soon perceived the contempt of the whole table gathering upon me.

I cannot but suspect, Sir, that this odious fashion is produced by a conspiracy of the old, the ugly, and the ignorant, against the young and beautiful, the witty and the gay, as a contrivance to level all distinctions of nature and of art, to confound the world in a chaos of folly, to take from those who could outshine them all the advantages of mind and body, to

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withhold youth from its natural pleasures, deprive wit of its influence, and beauty of its charms, to fix those hearts upon money, to which love has hitherto been entitled, to sink life into a tedious uniformity, and to allow it no other hopes or fears, but those of robbing, and being robbed.

Be pleased, Sir, to inform those of my sex who have minds capable of nobler sentiments, that, if they will unite in vindication of their pleasures and their prerogatives, they may fix a time, at which cards shall cease to be in fashion, or be left only to those who have neither beauty to be loved, nor spirit to be feared; neither knowledge to teach, nor modesty to learn; and who, having passed their youth in vice, are justly condemned to spend their age in folly.

I am, Sir, &c.

CLEORA.

SIR,

VEXATION will burst my heart, if I do not give it vent. As you publish a paper, I insist upon it that you insert this in your next, as ever you hope for the kindness and encouragement of any woman of taste, spirit, and virtue. I would have it published to the world, how deserving wives are used by imperious coxcombs, that henceforth no woman may marry who has not the patience of Grizzel. Nay, if even Grizzel had been married to a gamester, her temper would never have held out. A wretch that loses his good-humour and humanity along with his money, and will not allow enough from his own

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extravagances to support a woman of fashion in the necessary amusements of life!—Why does not he employ his wise head to make a figure in parliament, raise an estate, and get a title? That would be fitter for the master of a family, than rattling a noisy dice-box; and then he might indulge his wife in a few slight expences and elegant diversions.

What if I was unfortunate at Brag?—should he not have stayed to see how luck would turn another time? Instead of that, what does he do, but picks a quarrel, upbraids me with loss of beauty, abuses my acquaintance, ridicules my play, and insults my understanding; says, forsooth, that women have not heads enough to play with any thing but dolls, and that they should be employed in things proportionable to their understanding, keep at home, and mind family affairs.

I do stay at home, Sir, and all the world knows I am at home every Sunday. I have had six routs this winter, and sent out ten packs of cards in invitations to private parties. As for management, I am sure he cannot call me extravagant, or say I do not mind my family. The children are out at nurse in villages as cheap as any two little brats can be kept, nor have I ever seen them since; so he has no trouble about them. The servants live at board wages. My own dinners come from the Thatched House; and I have never paid a penny for any thing I have bought since I was married. As for play, I do think I may, indeed, indulge in that, now I am my own mistress. Papa made me drudge at whist till I was tired of it; and, far from wanting a head, Mr. Hoyle, when

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he had not given me above forty lessons, said I was one of his best scholars. I thought then with myself, that, if once I was at liberty, I would leave play, and take to reading romances, things so forbidden at our house, and so railed at, that it was impossible not to fancy them very charming. Most unfortunately, to save me from absolute undutifulness, just as I was married, came dear Brag into fashion, and ever since it has been the joy of my life; so easy, so cheerful and careless, so void of thought, and so genteel! Who can help loving it? Yet the perfidious thing has used me very ill of late, and to-morrow I should have changed it for Faro. But, oh! this detestable to-morrow, a thing always expected, and never found.——Within these few hours must I be dragged into the country. The wretch, Sir, left me in a fit, which his threatenings had occasioned, and unmercifully ordered a post-chaise. Stay I cannot, for money I have none, and credit I cannot get. ——But I will make the monkey play with me at piequet upon the road for all I want. I am almost sure to beat him, and his debts of honour I know he will pay. Then who can tell but I may still come back and conquer lady Packer? Sir, you need not print this last scheme, and, upon second thoughts, you may.—— Oh, distraction! the post-chaise is at the door. Sir, publish what you will, only let it be printed without a name.

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NUMB. 16. SATURDAY, *May* 12, 1750.

———Multis dicendi copia torrens,
Et sua mortifera est facundia—— JUV

Some who the depths of eloquence have found,
In that unnavigable stream were drown'd. DRYDEN.

SIR,

I AM the modest young man whom you favoured with your advice, in a late paper; and, as I am very far from suspecting that you foresaw the numberless inconveniencies which I have, by following it, brought upon myself, I will lay my condition open before you, for you seem bound to extricate me from the perplexities in which your counsel, however innocent in the intention, has contributed to involve me.

You told me, as you thought, to my comfort, that a writer might easily find means of introducing his genius to the world, for the *presses of England were open.* This I have now fatally experienced; the press is, indeed, open.

——— Facilis descensus Averni,
Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis. VIRG.

The gates of hell are open night and day;
Smooth the descent, and easy is the way. DRYDEN.

The means of doing hurt to ourselves are always at hand. I immediately sent to a printer, and contracted with him for an impression of several thou-

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sands of my pamphlet. While it was at the press, I was seldom absent from the printing-house, and continually urged the workmen to haste, by solicitations, promises, and rewards. From the day all other pleasures were excluded, by the delightful employment of correcting the sheets; and from the night, sleep generally was banished, by anticipations of the happiness which every hour was bringing nearer..

At last the time of publication approached, and my heart beat with the raptures of an author. I was above all little precautions, and, in defiance of envy or of criticism, set my name upon the title, without sufficiently considering, that what has once passed the press is irrevocable, and that though the printing-house may properly be compared to the infernal regions, for the facility of its entrance, and the difficulty with which authors return from it; yet there is this difference, that a great genius can never return to his former state, by a happy draught of the waters of oblivion.

I am now, Mr. Rambler, known to be an author, and am condemned, irreversibly condemned, to all the miseries of high reputation. The first morning after publication my friends assembled about me; I presented each, as is usual, with a copy of my book. They looked into the first pages, but were hindered, by their admiration, from reading further. The first pages are, indeed, very elaborate. Some passages they particularly dwelt upon, as more eminently beautiful than the rest; and some delicate strokes, and secret elegancies, I pointed

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out to them, which had escaped their observation. I then begged of them to forbear their compliments, and invited them, I could do no less, to dine with me at a tavern. After dinner, the book was resumed; but their praises very often so much overpowered my modesty, that I was forced to put about the glass, and had often no means of repressing the clamours of their admiration, but by thundering to the drawer for another bottle.

Next morning another set of my acquaintance congratulated me upon my performance, with such importunity of praise, that I was again forced to obviate their civilities by a treat. On the third day, I had yet a greater number of applauders to put to silence in the same manner; and, on the fourth, those whom I had entertained the first day came again, having, in the perusal of the remaining part of the book, discovered so many forcible sentences and masterly touches, that it was impossible for me to bear the repetition of their commendations. I therefore persuaded them once more to adjourn to the tavern, and chuse some other subject, on which I might share in their conversation. But it was not in their power to withhold their attention from my performance, which had so entirely taken possession of their minds, that no entreaties of mine could change their topick, and I was obliged to stifle, with claret, that praise which neither my modesty could hinder, nor my uneasiness repress.

The whole week was thus spent in a kind of literary revel, and I have now found that nothing is so expensive as great abilities, unless there is

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joined with them an insatiable eagerness of praise; for to escape from the pain of hearing myself exalted above the greatest names, dead and living, of the learned world, it has already cost me two hogsheads of port, fifteen gallons of arrack, ten dozen of claret, and five and forty bottles of champagne.

I was resolved to stay at home no longer, and therefore rose early and went to the coffee-house; but found that I had now made myself too eminent for happiness, and that I was no longer to enjoy the pleasure of mixing, upon equal terms, with the rest of the world. As soon as I enter the room, I see part of the company raging with envy, which they endeavour to conceal, sometimes with the appearance of laughter, and sometimes with that of contempt; but the disguise is such, that I can discover the secret rancour of their hearts, and as envy is deservedly its own punishment, I frequently indulge myself in tormenting them with my presence.

But though there may be some slight satisfaction received from the mortification of my enemies, yet my benevolence will not suffer me to take any pleasure in the terrours of my friends. I have been cautious, since the appearance of my work, not to give myself more premeditated airs of superiority, than the most rigid humility might allow. It is, indeed, not impossible that I may sometimes have laid down my opinion, in a manner that shewed a consciousness of my ability to maintain it, or interrupted the conversation, when I saw its tendency, without suffering the speaker to waste his time in explaining his sentiments; and, indeed, I did indulge myself for two

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days in a custom of drumming with my fingers, when the company began to lose themselves in absurdities, or to encroach upon subjects which I knew them unqualified to discuss. But I generally acted with great appearance of respect, even to those whose stupidity I pitied in my heart. Yet, notwithstanding this exemplary moderation, so universal is the dread of uncommon powers, and such the unwillingness of mankind to be made wiser, that I have now for some days found myself shunned by all my acquaintance. If I knock at a door, no body is at home; if I enter a coffee-house, I have the box to myself. I live in the town like a lion in his desert, or an eagle on his rock, too great for friendship or society, and condemned to solitude by unhappy elevation and dreaded ascendency.

Nor is my character only formidable to others, but burdensome to myself. I naturally love to talk without much thinking, to scatter my merriment at random, and to relax my thoughts with ludicrous remarks and fanciful images; but such is now the importance of my opinion, that I am afraid to offer it, lest, by being established too hastily into a maxim, it should be the occasion of errour to half the nation; and such is the expectation with which I am attended, when I am going to speak, that I frequently pause to reflect whether what I am about to utter is worthy of myself.

This, Sir, is sufficiently miserable; but there are still greater calamities behind. You must have read in Pope and Swift how men of parts have had their closets rifled, and their cabinets broke open, at the

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instigation of piratical booksellers, for the profit of their works; and it is apparent that there are many prints now sold in the shops, of men whom you cannot suspect of sitting for that purpose, and whose likenesses must have been certainly stolen when their names made their faces vendible. These considerations at first put me on my guard, and I have, indeed, found sufficient reason for my caution, for I have discovered many people examining my countenance, with a curiosity that shewed their intention to draw it; I immediately left the house, but find the same behaviour in another.

Others may be persecuted, but I am haunted; I have good reason to believe that eleven painters are now dogging me, for they know that he who can get my face first will make his fortune. I often change my wig, and wear my hat over my eyes, by which I hope somewhat to confound them; for you know it is not fair to sell my face, without admitting me to share the profit.

I am, however, not so much in pain for my face as for my papers, which I dare neither carry with me nor leave behind. I have, indeed, taken some measures for their preservation, having put them in an iron chest, and fixed a padlock upon my closet. I change my lodgings five times a week, and always remove at the dead of night.

Thus I live, in consequence of having given too great proofs of a predominant genius, in the solitude of a hermit, with the anxiety of a miser, and the caution of an outlaw; afraid to shew my face lest it should be copied; afraid to speak, lest I

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should injure my character; and to write, lest my correspondents should publish my letters; always uneasy lest my servants should steal my papers for the sake of money, or my friends for that of the publick. This it is to soar above the rest of mankind; and this representation I lay before you, that I may be informed how to divest myself of the laurels which are so cumbersome to the wearer, and descend to the enjoyment of that quiet, from which I find a writer of the first class so fatally debarred.

MISELLUS.

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NUMB. 17. TUESDAY, *May* 15, 1750.

——— *Me non oracula certum,*
Sed mors certa facit. LUCAN.

Let those weak minds, who live in doubt and fear,
To juggling priests for oracles repair;
One certain hour of death to each decreed,
My fixt, my certain soul, from doubt has freed. ROWE.

IT is recorded of some eastern monarch, that he kept an officer in his house, whose employment it was to remind him of his mortality, by calling out every morning, at a stated hour, *Remember, prince, that thou shalt die!* And the contemplation of the frailness and uncertainty of our present state appeared of so much importance to Solon of Athens, that he left this precept to future ages; *Keep thine eye fixed upon the end of life.*

A frequent and attentive prospect of that moment, which must put a period to all our schemes, and deprive us of all our acquisitions, is indeed of the utmost efficacy to the just and rational regulation of our lives; nor would ever any thing wicked, or often any thing absurd, be undertaken or prosecuted by him who should begin every day with a serious reflection that he is born to die.

The disturbers of our happiness, in this world, are our desires, our griefs, and our fears; and to

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all these, the consideration of mortality is a certain and adequate remedy. Think, says Epictetus, frequently on poverty, banishment, and death, and thou wilt then never indulge violent desires, or give up thy heart to mean sentiments, οὐδὲν οὐδέποτε ταπεινὸν ἐνθυμηση, ὅτε ἄγαν ἐπιθυμήσεις τινός.

That the maxim of Epictetus is founded on just observation will easily be granted, when we reflect, how that vehemence of eagerness after the common objects of pursuit is kindled in our minds. We represent to ourselves the pleasures of some future possession, and suffer our thoughts to dwell attentively upon it, till it has wholly engrossed the imagination, and permits us not to conceive any happiness but its attainment, or any misery but its loss; every other satisfaction which the bounty of Providence has scattered over life is neglected as inconsiderable, in comparison of the great object which we have placed before us, and is thrown from us as incumbering our activity, or trampled under foot as standing in our way.

Every man has experienced how much of this ardour has been remitted, when a sharp or tedious sickness has set death before his eyes. The extensive influence of greatness, the glitter of wealth, the praises of admirers, and the attendance of supplicants, have appeared vain and empty things, when the last hour seemed to be approaching: and the same appearance they would always have, if the same thought was always predominant. We should then find the absurdity of stretching out our arms incessantly to grasp that which we cannot keep, and

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wearing out our lives in endeavours to add new turrets to the fabrick of ambition, when the foundation itself is shaking, and the ground on which it stands is mouldering away.

All envy is proportionate to desire; we are uneasy at the attainments of another, according as we think our own happiness would be advanced by the addition of that which he withholds from us; and therefore whatever depresses immoderate wishes, will, at the same time, set the heart free from the corrosion of envy, and exempt us from that vice which is, above most others, tormenting to ourselves, hateful to the world, and productive of mean artifices, and sordid projects. He that considers how soon he must close his life, will find nothing of so much importance as to close it well; and will, therefore, look with indifference upon whatever is useless to that purpose. Whoever reflects frequently upon the uncertainty of his own duration, will find out, that the state of others is not more permanent, and that what can confer nothing on himself very desirable, cannot so much improve the condition of a rival, as to make him much superior to those from whom he has carried the prize, a prize too mean to deserve a very obstinate opposition.

Even grief, that passion to which the virtuous and tender mind is particularly subject, will be obviated or alleviated by the same thoughts. It will be obviated, if all the blessings of our condition are enjoyed with a constant sense of this uncertain tenure. If we remember, that whatever we possess is to be in our hands but a very little

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time, and that the little which our most lively hopes can promise us may be made less by ten thousand accidents; we shall not much repine at a loss, of which we cannot estimate the value, but of which, though we are not able to tell the least amount, we know, with sufficient certainty, the greatest, and are convinced that the greatest is not much to be regretted.

But, if any passion has so much usurped our understanding, as not to suffer us to enjoy advantages with the moderation prescribed by reason, it is not too late to apply this remedy, when we find ourselves sinking under sorrow, and inclined to pine for that which, is irrecoverably vanished. We may then usefully revolve the uncertainty of our own condition, and the folly of lamenting that from which, if it had stayed a little longer, we should ourselves have been taken away.

With regard to the sharpest and most melting sorrow, that which arises from the loss of those whom we have loved with tenderness, it may be observed, that friendship between mortals can be contracted on no other terms, than that one must some time mourn for the other's death: And this grief will always yield to the survivor one consolation proportionate to his affliction; for the pain, whatever it be, that he himself feels, his friend has escaped.

Nor is fear, the most overbearing and resistless of all our passions, less to be temperated by this universal medicine of the mind. The frequent contemplation of death, as it shews the vanity of all human good, discovers likewise the lightness of all terrestrial

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evil, which certainly can last no longer than the subject upon which it acts; and according to the old observation, must be shorter, as it is more violent. The most cruel calamity which misfortune can produce, must, by the necessity of nature, be quickly at an end. The soul cannot long be held in prison, but will fly away, and leave a lifeless body to human malice.

——*Ridetque sui ludibria trunci.*

And soaring mocks the broken frame below.

The utmost that we can threaten to one another is that death, which, indeed, we may precipitate, but cannot retard, and from which, therefore, it cannot become a wise man to buy a reprieve at the expence of virtue, since he knows not how small a portion of time he can purchase, but knows, that whether short or long, it will be made less valuable by the remembrance of the price at which it has been obtained. He is sure that he destroys his happiness, but is not sure that he lengthens his life.

The known shortness of life, as it ought to moderate our passions, may likewise, with equal propriety, contract our designs. There is not time for the most forcible genius, and most active industry, to extend its effects beyond a certain sphere. To project the conquest of the world, is the madness of mighty princes; to hope for excellence in every science, has been the folly of literary heroes; and both have found at last, that they have panted for a height of eminence denied to humanity, and have lost many opportunities of making themselves useful and happy, by a vain ambition of obtaining

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a species of honour, which the eternal laws of Providence have placed beyond the reach of man.

The miscarriages of the great designs of princes are recorded in the historics of the world, but are of little use to the bulk of mankind, who seem very little interested in admonitions against errours which they cannot commit. But the fate of learned ambition is a proper subject for every scholar to consider; for who has not had occasion to regret the dissipation of great abilities in a boundless multiplicity of pursuits, to lament the sudden desertion of excellent designs, upon the offer of some other subject made inviting by its novelty, and to observe the inaccuracy and deficiencies of works left unfinished by too great an extension of the plan?

It is always pleasing to observe, how much more our minds can conceive, than our bodies can perform; yet it is our duty, while we continue in this complicated state, to regulate one part of our composition by some regard to the other. We are not to indulge our corporeal appetites with pleasures that impair our intellectual vigour, nor gratify our minds with schemes which we know our lives must fail in attempting to execute. The uncertainty of our duration ought at once to set bounds to our designs, and add incitements to our industry; and when we find ourselves inclined either to immensity in our schemes, or sluggishness in our endeavours, we may either check, or animate, ourselves, by recollecting, with the father of physick, *that art is long, and life is short.*

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NUMB. 18. SATURDAY, *May* 19, 1750.

Illic matre carentibus,
Privignis mulier temperat innocens,
Nec dotata regit virum
Conjux, nec nitido fidit adultero:
Dos est magna parentum
Virtus, et metuens alterius tori
Certo fœdere castitas. HORACE.

Not there the guiltless step-dame knows
The baleful draught for orphans to compose;
No wife high portion'd rules her spouse,
Or trusts her essenced lover's faithless vows.
The lovers there for dow'ry claim
The father's virtue, and the spotless fame,
Which dares not break the nuptial tie. FRANCIS.

THERE is no observation more frequently made by such as employ themselves in surveying the conduct of mankind, than that marriage, though the dictate of nature, and the institution of Providence, is yet very often the cause of misery, and that those who enter into that state can seldom forbear to express their repentance, and their envy of those whom either chance or caution hath withheld from it.

This general unhappiness has given occasion to many sage maxims among the serious, and smart remarks among the gay; the moralist and the writer of epigrams have equally shewn their abilities upon it; some have lamented, and some have ridiculed

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it; but as the faculty of writing has been chiefly a masculine endowment, the reproach of making the world miserable has been always thrown upon the women, and the grave and the merry have equally thought themselves at liberty to conclude either with declamatory complaints, or satirical censures, of female folly or fickleness, ambition or cruelty, extravagance or lust.

Led by such a number of examples, and incited by my share in the common interest, I sometimes venture to consider this universal grievance, having endeavoured to divest my heart of all partiality, and place myself as a kind of neutral being between the sexes, whose clamours being equally vented on both sides with all the vehemence of distress, all the apparent confidence of justice, and all the indignation of injured virtue, seem entitled to equal regard. The men have, indeed, by their superiority of writing, been able to collect the evidence of many ages, and raise prejudices in their favour by the venerable testimonies of philosophers, historians, and poets, but the pleas of the ladies appeal to passions of more forcible operation than the reverence of antiquity. If they have not so great names on their side, they have stronger arguments: it is to little purpose, that Socrates, or Euripides, are produced against the sighs of softness, and the tears of beauty. The most frigid and inexorable judge would at least stand suspended between equal powers, as Lucan was perplexed in the determination of the cause, where the deities were on one side, and Cato on the other.

But I, who have long studied the severest and

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most abstracted philosophy, have now, in the cool maturity of life, arrived at such command over my passions, that I can hear the vociferations of either sex without catching any of the fire from those that utter them. For I have found, by long experience, that a man will sometimes rage at his wife, when in reality his mistress has offended him; and a lady complain of the cruelty of her husband, when she has no other enemy than bad cards. I do not suffer myself to be any longer imposed upon by oaths on one side, or fits on the other; nor when the husband hastens to the tavern, and the lady retires to her closet, am I always confident that they are driven by their miseries; since I have sometimes reason to believe, that they purpose not so much to soothe their sorrows, as to animate their fury. But how little credit soever may be given to particular accusations, the general accumulation of the charge shews, with too much evidence, that married persons are not very often advanced in felicity; and, therefore, it may be proper to examine at what avenues so many evils have made their way into the world. With this purpose, I have reviewed the lives of my friends, who have been least successful in connubial contracts, and attentively considered by what motives they were incited to marry, and by what principles they regulated their choice.

One of the first of my acquaintances that resolved to quit the unsettled thoughtless condition of a bachelor, was Prudentius, a man of slow parts, but not without knowledge or judgment in things which he had leisure to consider gradually before he deter-

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mined them. Whenever we met at a tavern, it was his province to settle the scheme of our entertainment, contract with the cook, and inform us when we had called for wine to the sum originally proposed. This grave considerer found, by deep meditation, that a man was no loser by marrying early, even though he contented himself with a less fortune; for estimating the exact worth of annuities, he found that considering the constant diminution of the value of life, with the probable fall of the interest of money, it was not worse to have ten thousand pounds at the age of two and twenty years, than a much larger fortune at thirty; for many opportunities, says he, occur of improving money, which if a man misses, he may not afterwards recover.

Full of these reflections, he threw his eyes about him, not in search of beauty or elegance, dignity or understanding, but of a woman with ten thousand pounds. Such a woman, in a wealthy part of the kingdom, it was not very difficult to find; and by artful management with her father, whose ambition was to make his daughter a gentlewoman, my friend got her, as he boasted to us in confidence two days after his marriage, for a settlement of seventy-three pounds a year less than her fortune might have claimed, and less than he would himself have given, if the fools had been but wise enough to delay the bargain.

Thus, at once delighted with the superiority of his parts and the augmentation of his fortune, he carried Furia to his own house, in which he never afterwards enjoyed one hour of happiness. For Fu-

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ria was a wretch of mean intellects, violent passions, a strong voice, and low education, without any sense of happiness but that which consisted in eating and counting money. Furia was a scold. They agreed in the desire of wealth, but with this difference, that Prudentius was for growing rich by gain, Furia by parsimony. Prudentius would venture his money with chances very much in his favour; but Furia very wisely observing, that what they had was, while they had it, *their own*, thought all traffick too great a hazard, and was for putting it out at low interest, upon good security. Prudentius ventured, however, to insure a ship at a very unreasonable price, but happening to lose his money, was so tormented with the clamours of his wife, that he never durst try a second experiment. He has now grovelled seven and forty years under Furia's direction, who never once mentioned him, since his bad luck, by any other name than that of *the insurer*.

The next that married from our society was Florentius. He happened to see Zephyretta in a chariot at a horse-race, danced with her at night, was confirmed in his first ardour, waited on her next morning, and declared himself her lover. Florentius had not knowledge enough of the world, to distinguish between the flutter of coquetry, and the sprightliness of wit, or between the smile of allurement, and that of cheerfulness. He was soon awaked from his rapture, by conviction that his pleasure was but the pleasure of a day. Zephyretta had in four and twenty hours spent her stock of repartee, gone round the circle of her

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airs, and had nothing remaining for him but childish insipidity, or for herself, but the practice of the same artifices upon new men.

Melissus was a man of parts, capable of enjoying and of improving life. He had passed through the various scenes of gaiety with that indifference and possession of himself, natural to men who have something higher and nobler in their prospect. Retiring to spend the summer in a village little frequented, he happened to lodge in the same house with Ianthe, and was unavoidably drawn to some acquaintance, which her wit and politeness soon invited him to improve. Having no opportunity of any other company, they were always together; and as they owed their pleasures to each other, they began to forget that any pleasure was enjoyed before their meeting. Melissus, from being delighted with her company, quickly began to be uneasy in her absence, and being sufficiently convinced of the force of her understanding, and finding, as he imagined, such a conformity of temper as declared them formed for each other, addressed her as a lover, after no very long courtship obtained her for his wife, and brought her next winter to town in triumph.

Now began their infelicity. Melissus had only seen her in one scene, where there was no variety of objects, to produce the proper excitements to contrary desires. They had both loved solitude and reflection, where there was nothing but solitude and reflection to be loved; but when they came into publick life, Ianthe discovered those passions which accident rather than hypocrisy had hitherto concealed.

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She was, indeed, not without the power of thinking, but was wholly without the exertion of that power when either gaiety or splendour played on her imagination. She was expensive in her diversions, vehement in her passions, insatiate of pleasure, however dangerous to her reputation, and eager of applause, by whomsoever it might be given. This was the wife which Melissus the philosopher found in his retirement, and from whom he expected an associate in his studies, and an assistant to his virtues.

Prosapius, upon the death of his younger brother, that the family might not be extinct, married his housekeeper, and has ever since been complaining to his friends that mean notions are instilled into his children, that he is ashamed to sit at his own table, and that his house is uneasy to him for want of suitable companions.

Avaro, master of a very large estate, took a woman of bad reputation, recommended to him by a rich uncle, who made that marriage the condition on which he should be his heir. Avaro now wonders to perceive his own fortune, his wife's and his uncle's, insufficient to give him that happiness which is to be found only with a woman of virtue.

I intend to treat in more papers on this important article of life, and shall, therefore, make no reflection upon these historics, except that all whom I have mentioned failed to obtain happiness, for want of considering that marriage is the strictest tie of perpetual friendship; that there can be no friendship without confidence, and no

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confidence without integrity; and that he must expect to be wretched, who pays to beauty, riches, or politeness, that regard which only virtue and piety can claim.

NUMB. 19. TUESDAY, *May* 22, 1750.

Dum te causidicum, dum te modo rhetora fingis,
Et non decernis, Taure, quid esse velis,
Peleos et Priami transit, vel Nestoris ætas,
Et serum fuerat jam tibi desinere.——
Eja, age, rumpe moras, quo te spectabimus usque?
Dum quid sis dubitas, jam potes esse nihil. MART.

To rhetorick now, and now to law inclin'd,
Uncertain where to fix thy changing mind;
Old Priam's age or Nestor's may be out,
And thou, O Taures! still go on in doubt.
Come then, how long such wavering shall we see?
Thou may'st doubt on: thou now canst nothing be.
F. LEWIS.

IT is never without very melancholy reflections, that we can observe the misconduct, or miscarriage, of those men, who seem, by the force of understanding, or extent of knowledge, exempted from the general frailties of human nature, and privileged from the common infelicities of life. Though the world is crowded with scenes of calamity, we look upon the

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general mass of wretchedness with very little regard, and fix our eyes upon the state of particular persons, whom the eminence of their qualities marks out from the multitude; as in reading an account of a battle, we seldom reflect on the vulgar heaps of slaughter, but follow the hero with our whole attention, through all the varieties of his fortune, without a thought of the thousands that are falling round him.

With the same kind of anxious veneration I have for many years been making observations on the life of Polyphilus, a man whom all his acquaintances have, from his first appearance in the world, feared for the quickness of his discernment, and admired for the multiplicity of his attainments, but whose progress in life, and usefulness to mankind, has been hindered by the superfluity of his knowledge, and the celerity of his mind.

Polyphilus was remarkable, at the school, for surpassing all his companions, without any visible application, and at the university was distinguished equally for his successful progress as well through the thorny mazes of science, as the flowery path of politer literature, without any strict confinement to hours of study, or remarkable forbearance of the common amusements of young men.

When Polyphilus was at the age in which men usually choose their profession, and prepare to enter into a public character, every academical eye was fixed upon him; all were curious to inquire what this universal genius would fix upon for the employment of his life; and no doubt was made but that

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he would leave all his contemporaries behind him, and mount to the highest honours of that class in which he should inlist himself, without those delays and pauses which must be endured by meaner abilities.

Polyphilus, though by no means insolent or assuming, had been sufficiently encouraged, by uninterrupted success, to place great confidence in his own parts; and was not below his companions in the indulgence of his hopes, and expectations of the astonishment with which the world would be struck, when first his lustre should break out upon it; nor could he forbear (for whom does not constant flattery intoxicate?) to join sometimes in the mirth of his friends, at the sudden disappearance of those, who, having shone a while, and drawn the eyes of the publick upon their feeble radiance, were now doomed to fade away before him.

It is natural for a man to catch advantageous notions of the condition which those with whom he converses are striving to attain. Polyphilus, in a ramble to London, fell accidentally among the physicians, and was so much pleased with the prospect of turning philosophy to profit, and so highly delighted with a new theory of fevers which darted into his imagination, and which, after having considered it a few hours, he found himself able to maintain against all the advocates for the ancient system, that he resolved to apply himself to anatomy, botany, and chemistry, and to leave no part unconquered, either of the animal, mineral, or vegetable kingdoms.

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He therefore read authors, constructed systems, and tried experiments; but, unhappily, as he was going to see a new plant in flower at Chelsea, he met, in crossing Westminster to take water, the chancellor's coach; he had the curiosity to follow him into the hall, where a remarkable cause happened to be tried, and found himself able to produce so many arguments, which the lawyers had omitted on both sides, that he determined to quit physic for a profession in which he found it would be so easy to excel, and which promised higher honours, and larger profits, without melancholy attendance upon misery, mean submission to peevishness, and continual interruption of rest and pleasure.

He immediately took chambers in the Temple, bought a common-place book, and confined himself for some months to the perusal of the statutes, year-books, pleadings, and reports; he was a constant hearer of the courts, and began to put cases with reasonable accuracy. But he soon discovered, by considering the fortune of lawyers, that preferment was not to be got by acuteness, learning, and eloquence. He was perplexed by the absurdities of attornies, and misrepresentations made by his clients of their own causes, by the useless anxiety of one, and the incessant importunity of another; he began to repent of having devoted himself to a study, which was so narrow in its comprehension that it could never carry his name to any other country, and thought it unworthy of a man of parts to sell his life only for money. The barrenness of his fellow-students forced him generally into other com-

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pany at his hours of entertainment, and among the varieties of conversation through which his curiosity was daily wandering, he, by chance, mingled at a tavern with some intelligent officers of the army. A man of letters was easily dazzled with the gaiety of their appearance, and softened into kindness by the politeness of their address; he, therefore, cultivated this new acquaintance, and when he saw how readily they found in every place admission and regard, and how familiarly they mingled with every rank and order of men, he began to feel his heart beat for military honours, and wondered how the prejudices of the university should make him so long insensible of that ambition, which has fired so many hearts in every age, and negligent of that calling, which is, above all others, universally and invariably illustrious, and which gives, even to the exterior appearance of its professors, a dignity and freedom unknown to the rest of mankind.

These favourable impressions were made still deeper by his conversation with ladies, whose regard for soldiers he could not observe, without wishing himself one of that happy fraternity, to which the female world seem to have devoted their charms and their kindness. The love of knowledge, which was still his predominant inclination, was gratified by the recital of adventures, and accounts of foreign countries; and therefore he concluded that there was no way of life in which all his views could so completely concentre as in that of a soldier. In the art of war he thought it not difficult to excel, having observed his new friends not very much versed in

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the principles of tacticks or fortification; he therefore studied all the military writers both ancient and modern, and, in a short time, could tell how to have gained every remarkable battle that has been lost from the beginning of the world. He often shewed at table how Alexander should have been checked in his conquests, what was the fatal errour at Pharsalia, how Charles of Sweden might have escaped his ruin at Pultowa, and Marlborough might have been made to repent his temerity at Blenheim. He entrenched armies upon paper so that no superiority of numbers could force them, and modelled in clay many impregnable fortresses, on which all the present arts of attack would be exhausted without effect.

Polyphilus, in a short time, obtained a commission; but before he could rub off the solemnity of a scholar, and gain the true air of military vivacity, a war was declared, and forces sent to the continent. Here Polyphilus unhappily found that study alone would not make a soldier; for being much accustomed to think, he let the sense of danger sink into his mind, and felt at the approach of any action, that terrour which a sentence of death would have brought upon him. He saw that, instead of conquering their fears, the endeavour of his gay friends was only to escape them; but his philosophy chained his mind to its object, and rather loaded him with shackles than furnished him with arms. He, however, suppressed his misery in silence, and passed through the campaign with honour, but found himself utterly unable to support another.

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He then had recourse again to his books, and continued to range from one study to another. As I usually visit him once a month, and am admitted to him without previous notice, I have found him within this last half year, decyphering the Chinese language, making a farce, collecting a vocabulary of the obsolete terms of the English law, writing an inquiry concerning the ancient Corinthian brass, and forming a new scheme of the variations of the needle.

Thus is this powerful genius, which might have extended the sphere of any science, or benefited the world in any profession, dissipated in a boundless variety, without profit to others or himself! He makes sudden irruptions into the regions of knowledge, and sees all obstacles give way before him; but he never stays long enough to complete his conquest, to establish laws, or bring away the spoils.

Such is often the folly of men, whom nature has enabled to obtain skill and knowledge, on terms so easy, that they have no sense of the value of the acquisition; they are qualified to make such speedy progress in learning, that they think themselves at liberty to loiter in the way, and by turning aside after every new object, lose the race, like Atalanta, to slower competitors, who press diligently forward, and whose force is directed to a single point.

I have often thought those happy that have been fixed, from the first dawn of thought, in a determination to some state of life, by the choice of one whose authority may preclude caprice, and whose

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influence may prejudice them in favour of his opinion. The general precept of consulting the genius is of little use, unless we are told how the genius can be known. If it is to be discovered only by experiment, life will be lost before the resolution can be fixed; if any other indications are to be found, they may, perhaps, be very early discerned. At least, if to miscarry in an attempt be a proof of having mistaken the direction of the genius, men appear not less frequently deceived with regard to themselves than to others; and therefore no one has much reason to complain that his life was planned out by his friends, or to be confident that he should have had either more honour or happiness, by being abandoned to the chance of his own fancy.

It was said of the learned bishop Sanderson, that when he was preparing his lectures, he hesitated so much, and rejected so often, that, at the time of reading, he was often forced to produce, not what was best, but what happened to be at hand. This will be the state of every man, who, in the choice of his employment, balances all the arguments on every side; the complication is so intricate, the motives and objections so numerous, there is so much play for the imagination, and so much remains in the power of others, that reason is forced at last to rest in neutrality, the decision devolves into the hands of chance, and after a great part of life spent in inquiries which can never be resolved, the rest must often pass in repenting the unnecessary delay, and can be useful to few other purposes than to warn

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others against the same folly, and to shew, that of two states of life equally consistent with religion and virtue, he who choose earliest chooses best.

NUMB. 20. SATURDAY, *May* 26, 1750.

Ad populum phaleras, ego te intus, et in cute novi. PERSIUS.

Such pageantry be to the people shown;
There boast thy horse's trappings and thy own;
I know thee to thy bottom, from within
Thy shallow centre, to thy utmost skin. DRYDEN.

AMONG the numerous stratagems, by which pride endeavours to recommend folly to regard, there is scarcely one that meets with less success than affectation, or a perpetual disguise of the real character, by fictitious appearances; whether it be, that every man hates falsehood, from the natural congruity of truth to his faculties of reason, or that every man is jealous of the honour of his understanding, and thinks his discernment consequently called in question, whenever any thing is exhibited under a borrowed form.

This aversion from all kinds of disguise, whatever be its cause, is universally diffused, and incessantly in action; nor is it necessary, that to exasperate detestation, or excite contempt, any interest

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should be invaded, or any competition attempted; it is sufficient, that there is an intention to deceive, an intention which every heart swells to oppose, and every tongue is busy to detect.

This reflection was awakened in my mind by a very common practice among my correspondents, of writing under characters which they cannot support, which are of no use to the explanation or enforcement of that which they describe or recommend; and which, therefore, since they assume them only for the sake of displaying their abilities, I will advise them for the future to forbear, as laborious without advantage.

It is almost a general ambition of those who favour me with their advice for the regulation of my conduct, or their contribution for the assistance of my understanding, to affect the style and the names of ladies. And I cannot always withhold some expression of anger, like Sir Hugh in the comedy, when I happen to find that a woman has a beard. I must therefore warn the gentle Phyllis, that she send me no more letters from the Horse Guards; and require of Belinda, that she be content to resign her pretensions to female elegance, till she has lived three weeks without hearing the politicks of Batson's coffee-house. I must indulge myself in the liberty of observation, that there were some allusions in Chloris's production, sufficient to shew that Bracton and Plowden are her favourite authors; and that Euphelia has not been long enough at home, to wear out all the traces of phraseology, which she learned in the expedition to Carthagena.

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Among all my female friends, there was none who gave me more trouble to decypher her true character, than Penthesilea, whose letter lay upon my desk three days before I could fix upon the real writer. There was a confusion of images, and medley of barbarity, which held me long in suspence; till by perseverance I disentangled the perplexity, and found that Penthesilea is the son of a wealthy stock-jobber, who spends his morning under his father's eye in Change-Alley, dines at a tavern in Covent-Garden, passes his evening in the play-house, and part of the night at a gaming-table, and having learned the dialects of these various regions, has mingled them all in a studied composition.

When Lee was once told by a critick, that it was very easy to write like a madman; he answered, that it was difficult to write like a madman, but easy enough to write like a fool; and I hope to be excused by my kind contributors, if, in imitation of this great author, I presume to remind them, that it is much easier not to write like a man, than to write like a woman.

I have, indeed, some ingenious well-wishers, who, without departing from their sex, have found very wonderful appellations. A very smart letter has been sent me from a puny ensign, signed Ajax Telamonius; another, in recommendation of a new treatise upon cards, from a gamester, who calls himself Sesostris: and another upon the improvements of the fishery, from Dioclesian: but as these seem only to have picked up their appellations by chance, without endeavouring at any particular imposture, their

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improprieties are rather instances of blunder than of affectation, and are, therefore, not equally fitted to inflame the hostile passions; for it is not folly but pride, not errour but deceit, which the world means to persecute, when it raises the full cry of nature to hunt down affectation.

The hatred which dissimulation always draws upon itself, is so great, that if I did not know how much cunning differs from wisdom, I should wonder that any men have so little knowledge of their own interest, as to aspire to wear a mask for life; to try to impose upon the world a character, to which they feel themselves void of any just claim; and to hazard their quiet, their fame and even their profit, by exposing themselves to the danger of that reproach, malevolence, and neglect, which such a discovery as they have always to fear will certainly bring upon them.

It might be imagined, that the pleasure of reputation should consist in the satisfaction of having our opinion of our own merit confirmed by the suffrage of the publick; and that, to be extolled for a quality, which a man knows himself to want, should give him no other happiness than to be mistaken for the owner of an estate, over which he chances to be travelling. But he who subsists upon affectation, knows nothing of this delicacy; like a desperate adventurer in commerce, he takes up reputation upon trust, mortgages possessions which he never had, and enjoys, to the fatal hour of bankruptcy, though with a thousand terrors and anxieties, the unnecessary splendour of borrowed riches.

Affectation is to be always distinguished from

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hypocrisy, as being the art of counterfeiting those qualities which we might, with innocence and safety, be known to want. Thus the man who to carry on any fraud, or to conceal any crime, pretends to rigours of devotion, and exactness of life, is guilty of hypocrisy; and his guilt is greater, as the end, for which he puts on the false appearance, is more pernicious. But he that, with an awkward address, and unpleasing countenance, boasts of the conquests made by him among the ladies, and counts over the thousands which he might have possessed if he would have submitted to the yoke of matrimony, is chargeable only with affectation. Hypocrisy is the necessary burthen of villany, affectation part of the chosen trappings of folly; the one completes a villain, the other only finishes a fop. Contempt is the proper punishment of affectation, and detestation the just consequence of hypocrisy.

With the hypocrite it is not at present my intention to expostulate, though even he might be taught the excellency of virtue, by the necessity of seeming to be virtuous; but the man of affectation may, perhaps, be reclaimed, by finding how little he is likely to gain by perpetual constraint, and incessant vigilance, and how much more securely he might make his way to esteem, by cultivating real, than displaying counterfeit qualities.

Every thing future is to be estimated, by a wise man, in proportion to the probability of attaining it and its value, when attained; and neither of these considerations will much contribute to the encouragement of affectation. For, if the pinnacles of fame be

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at best, slippery, how unsteady must his footing be who stands upon pinnacles without foundation! If praise be made by the inconstancy and maliciousness of those who must confer it, a blessing which no man can promise himself from the most conspicuous merit and vigorous industry, how faint must be the hope of gaining it, when the uncertainty is multiplied by the weakness of the pretensions! He that pursues fame with just claims, trusts his happiness to the winds; but he that endeavours after it by false merit, has to fear, not only the violence of the storm, but the leaks of his vessel. Though he should happen to keep above water for a time, by the help of a soft breeze, and a calm sea, at the first gust he must inevitably founder, with this melancholy reflection, that, if he would have been content with his natural station, he might have escaped his calamity. Affectation may possibly succeed for a time, and a man may, by great attention, persuade others, that he really has the qualities which he presumes to boast; but the hour will come when he should exert them, and then whatever he enjoyed in praise, he must suffer in reproach.

Applause and admiration are by no means to be counted among the necessaries of life, and therefore any indirect arts to obtain them have very little claim to pardon or compassion. There is scarcely any man without some valuable or improveable qualities, by which he might always secure himself from contempt. And perhaps exemption from ignominy is the most eligible reputation, as freedom from pain is, among some philosophers, the definition of happiness.

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If we therefore compare the value of the praise obtained by fictitious excellence, even while the cheat is yet undiscovered, with that kindness which every man may suit by his virtue, and that esteem to which most men may rise by common understanding steadily and honestly applied, we shall find that when from the adscititious happiness all the deductions are made by fear and casualty, there will remain nothing equiponderant to the security of truth. The state of the possessor of humble virtues, to the affecter of great excellencies, is that of a small cottage of stone, to the palace raised with ice by the empress of Russia; it was for a time splendid and luminous, but the first sunshine melted it to nothing.

NUMB. 21. TUESDAY, *May* 29, 1750.

Terra salutiferas herbas, eademque nocentes,
Nutrit; et urticæ proxima sæpe rosa est. OVID.

Our bane and physick the same earth bestows,
And near the noisome nettle blooms the rose.

EVERY man is prompted by the love of himself to imagine, that he possesses some qualities, superiour, either in kind or in degree, to those which he sees allotted to the rest of the world; and, whatever apparent disadvantages he may suffer in the comparison with others, he has some invisible distinctions, some latent reserve of excellence, which he throws

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into the balance, and by which he generally fancies that it is turned in his favour.

The studious and speculative part of mankind always seem to consider their fraternity as placed in a state of opposition to those who are engaged in the tumult of publick business; and have pleased themselves, from age to age, with celebrating the felicity of their own condition, and with recounting the perplexity of politicks, the dangers of greatness, the anxieties of ambition, and the miseries of riches.

Among the numerous topicks of declamation, that their industry has discovered on this subject, there is none which they press with greater efforts, or on which they have more copiously laid out their reason and their imagination, than the instability of high stations, and the uncertainty with which the profits and honours are possessed, that must be acquired with so much hazard, vigilance, and labour.

This they appear to consider as an irrefragable argument against the choice of the statesman and the warriour; and swell with confidence of victory, thus furnished by the muses with the arms which never can be blunted, and which no art or strength of their adversaries can elude or resist.

It was well known by experience to the nations which employed elephants in war, that though by the terrour of their bulk, and the violence of their impression, they often threw the enemy into disorder, yet there was always danger in the use of them, very nearly equivalent to the advantage; for if their first charge could be supported, they were easily driven back upon their confederates; they then broke

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through the troops behind them, and made no less havock in the precipitation of their retreat, than in the fury of their onset.

I know not whether those who have so vehemently urged the inconveniencies and danger of an active life, have not made use of arguments that may be retorted with equal force upon themselves; and whether the happiness of a candidate for literary fame be not subject to the same uncertainty with that of him who governs provinces, commands armies, presides in the senate, or dictates in the cabinet.

That eminence of learning is not to be gained without labour, at least equal to that which any other kind of greatness can require, will be allowed by those who wish to elevate the character of a scholar; since they cannot but know, that every human acquisition is valuable in proportion to the difficulty employed in its attainment. And that those who have gained the esteem and veneration of the world, by their knowledge or their genius, are by no means exempt from the solicitude which any other kind of dignity produces, may be conjectured from the innumerable artifices which they make use of to degrade a superiour, to repress a rival, or obstruct a follower; artifices so gross and mean, as to prove evidently how much a man may excel in learning, without being either more wise or more virtuous than those whose ignorance he pities or despises.

Nothing therefore remains, by which the student can gratify his desire of appearing to have built his happiness on a more firm basis than his antagonist,

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except the certainty with which his honours are enjoyed. The garlands gained by the heroes of literature must be gathered from summits equally difficult to climb with those that bear the civick or triumphal wreaths, they must be worn with equal envy, and guarded with equal care from those hands that are always employed in efforts to tear them away; the only remaining hope is, that their verdure is more lasting, and that they are less likely to fade by time, or less obnoxious to the blasts of accident.

Even this hope will receive very little encouragement from the examination of the history of learning, or observation of the fate of scholars in the present age. If we look back into past times, we find innumerable names of authors once in high reputation, read perhaps by the beautiful, quoted by the witty, and commented on by the grave; but of whom we now know only that they once existed. If we consider the distribution of literary fame in our own time, we shall find it a possession of very uncertain tenure; sometimes bestowed by a sudden caprice of the publick, and again transferred to a new favourite, for no other reason than that he is new; sometimes refused to long labour and eminent desert, and sometimes granted to very slight pretensions; lost sometimes by security and negligence, and sometimes by too diligent endeavours to retain it.

A successful author is equally in danger of the diminution of his fame, whether he continues or ceases to write. The regard of the publick is not to be kept but by tribute, and the remembrance of past

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service will quickly languish, unless successive performances frequently revive it. Yet in every new attempt there is new hazard, and there are few who do not at some unlucky time, injure their own characters by attempting to enlarge them.

There are many possible causes of that inequality which we may so frequently observe in the performances of the same man, from the influence of which no ability or industry is sufficiently secured, and which have so often sullied the splendour of genius, that the wit, as well as the conqueror, may be properly cautioned not to indulge his pride with too early triumphs, but to defer to the end of life his estimate of happiness.

—— *Ultima semper*
Expectanda dies homini, dicique beatus
Ante obitum nemo supremaque funera debet.

But no frail man, however great or high,
Can be concluded blest before he die. ADDISON.

Among the motives that urge an author to undertakings by which his reputation is impaired, one of the most frequent must be mentioned with tenderness, because it is not to be counted among his follies, but his miseries. It very often happens that the works of learning or of wit are performed at the direction of those by whom they are to be rewarded; the writer has not always the choice of his subject, but is compelled to accept any task which is thrown before him without much consideration of his own convenience, and without time to prepare himself by previous studies.

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Miscarriages of this kind are likewise frequently the consequence of that acquaintance with the great, which is generally considered as one of the chief privileges of literature and genius. A man who has once learned to think himself exalted by familiarity with those whom nothing but their birth, or their fortunes, or such stations as are seldom gained by moral excellence, set above him, will not be long without submitting his understanding to their conduct; he will suffer them to prescribe the course of his studies, and employ him for their own purposes either of diversion or interest. His desire of pleasing those whose favour he has weakly made necessary to himself, will not suffer him always to consider how little he is qualified for the work imposed. Either his vanity will tempt him to conceal his deficiences, or that cowardice, which always encroaches fast upon such as spend their lives in the company of persons higher than themselves, will not leave him resolution to assert the liberty of choice.

But, though we suppose that a man by his fortune can avoid the necessity of dependance, and by his spirit can repel the usurpations of patronage, yet he may easily, by writing long, happen to write ill. There is a general succession of events in which contraries are produced by periodical vicissitudes; labour and care are rewarded with success, success produces confidence, confidence relaxes industry, and negligence ruins that reputation which accuracy had raised.

He that happens not to be lulled by praise into supineness, may be animated by it to undertakings

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above his strength, or incited to fancy himself alike qualified for every kind of composition, and able to comply with the publick taste through all its variations. By some opinion like this, many men have been engaged, at an advanced age, in attempts which they had not time to complete, and after a few weak efforts, sunk into the grave with vexation to see the rising generation gain ground upon them. From these failures the highest genius is not exempt; that judgment which appears so penetrating, when it is employed upon the works of others, very often fails where interest or passion can exert their power. We are blinded in examining our own labours by innumerable prejudices. Our juvenile compositions please us, because they bring to our minds the remembrance of youth; our later performances we are ready to esteem, because we are unwilling to think that we have made no improvement; what flows easily from the pen charms us, because we read with pleasure that which flatters our opinion of our own powers; what was composed with great struggles of the mind we do not easily reject, because we cannot bear that so much labour should be fruitless. But the reader has none of these prepossessions, and wonders that the author is so unlike himself, without considering that the same soil will, with different culture, afford different products.

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NUMB. 22. SATURDAY, *June* 2, 1750.

——— *Ego nec studium sine divite venâ,*
Nec rude quid prosit video ingenium, alterius sic
Altera poscit opem res, et conjurat amice. HOR.

Without a genius learning soars in vain;
And without learning genius sinks again;
Their force united crowns the sprightly reign.
ELPHINSTON.

WIT and LEARNING were the children of Apollo, by different mothers; WIT was the offspring of EUPHROSYNE, and resembled her in cheerfulness and vivacity; LEARNING was born of SOPHIA, and retained her seriousness and caution. As their mothers were rivals, they were bred up by them from their birth in habitual opposition, and all means were so incessantly employed to impress upon them a hatred and contempt of each other, that though Apollo, who foresaw the ill effects of their discord, endeavoured to soften them, by dividing his regard equally between them, yet his impartiality and kindness were without effect; the maternal animosity was deeply rooted, having been intermingled with their first ideas, and was confirmed every hour, as fresh opportunities occurred of exerting it. No sooner were they of age to be received into the apartments of the other celestials, than WIT began to entertain Venus at her toilet, by aping the solemnity of LEARNING, and LEARNING to divert

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Minerva at her loom, by exposing the blunders and ignorance of WIT.

Thus they grew up, with malice perpetually increasing, by the encouragement which each received from those whom their mothers had persuaded to patronize and support them; and longed to be admitted to the table of Jupiter, not so much for the hope of gaining honour, as of excluding a rival from all pretensions to regard, and of putting an everlasting stop to the progress of that influence which either believed the other to have obtained by mean arts and false appearances.

At last the day came, when they were both, with the usual solemnities, received into the class of superiour deities, and allowed to take nectar from the hand of Hebe. But from that hour CONCORD lost her authority at the table of Jupiter. The rivals, animated by their new dignity, and incited by the alternate applauses of the associate powers, harassed each other by incessant contests, with such a regular vicissitude of victory, that neither was depressed.

It was observable, that, at the beginning of every debate, the advantage was on the side of WIT; and that, at the first sallies, the whole assembly sparkled, according to Homer's expression, with unextinguishable merriment. But LEARNING would reserve her strength till the burst of applause was over, and the languor with which the violence of joy is always succeeded, began to promise more calm and patient attention. She then attempted her defence, and, by comparing one part of her antagonist's objections with another, commonly made him confute himself;

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or, by shewing how small a part of the question he had taken into his view, proved that his opinion could have no weight. The audience began gradually to lay aside their prepossessions, and rose, at last, with great veneration for LEARNING, but with greater kindness for WIT.

Their conduct was, whenever they desired to recommend themselves to distinction, entirely opposite. WIT was daring and adventurous; LEARNING cautious and deliberate. WIT thought nothing reproachful but dulness; LEARNING was afraid of no imputation but that of errour. WIT answered before he understood, lest his quickness of apprehension should be questioned; LEARNING paused, where there was no difficulty, lest any insidious sophism should lie undiscovered. WIT perplexed every debate by rapidity and confusion; LEARNING tired the hearers with endless distinctions, and prolonged the dispute without advantage, by proving that which never was denied. WIT, in hopes of shining, would venture to produce what he had not considered, and often succeeded beyond his own expectation, by following the train of a lucky thought; LEARNING would reject every new notion, for fear of being entangled in consequences which she could not foresee, and was often hindered, by her caution, from pressing her advantages, and subduing her opponent.

Both had prejudices, which in some degree hindered their progress towards perfection, and left them open to attacks. Novelty was the darling of WIT, and Antiquity of LEARNING. To WIT, all that

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was new was specious; to LEARNING, whatever was ancient was venerable. WIT however seldom failed to divert those whom he could not convince, and to convince was not often his ambition; LEARNING always supported her opinion with so many collateral truths, that, when the cause was decided against her, her arguments were remembered with admiration.

Nothing was more common, on either side, than to quit their proper characters, and to hope for a complete conquest by the use of the weapons which had been employed against them. WIT would sometimes labour a syllogism, and LEARNING distort her features with a jest; but they always suffered by the experiment, and betrayed themselves to confutation or contempt. The seriousness of WIT was without dignity, and the merriment of LEARNING without vivacity.

Their contests, by long continuance, grew at last important, and the divinities broke into parties. WIT was taken into protection of the laughter-loving Venus, had a retinue allowed him of SMILES and JESTS, and was often permitted to dance among the GRACES. LEARNING still continued the favourite of Minerva, and seldom went out of her palace without a train of the severer virtues, CHASTITY, TEMPERANCE, FORTITUDE, and LABOUR. WIT, cohabiting with MALICE, had a son named SATIRE, who followed him, carrying a quiver filled with poisoned arrows, which, where they once drew blood, could by no skill ever be extracted. These arrows he frequently shot at LEARNING, when she was most earnestly or usefully employed, engaged in abstruse

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inquiries, or giving instructions to her followers. Minerva therefore deputed CRITICISM to her aid, who generally broke the point of SATIRE'S arrows, turned them aside, or retorted them on himself.

Jupiter was at last angry that the peace of the heavenly regions should be in perpetual danger of violation, and resolved to dismiss these troublesome antagonists to the lower world. Hither therefore they came, and carried on their ancient quarrel among mortals, nor was either long without zealous votaries. WIT, by his gaiety, captivated the young; and LEARNING, by her authority, influenced the old. Their power quickly appeared by very eminent effects: theatres were built for the reception of WIT, and colleges endowed for the residence of LEARNING. Each party endeavoured to outvie the other in cost and magnificence, and to propagate an opinion, that it was necessary, from the first entrance into life, to enlist in one of the factions; and that none could hope for the regard of either divinity, who had once entered the temple of the rival power.

There were indeed a class of mortals, by whom WIT and LEARNING were equally disregarded: these were the devotees of Plutus, the god of riches; among these it seldom happened that the gaiety of WIT could raise a smile, or the eloquence of LEARNING procure attention. In revenge of this contempt they agreed to incite their followers against them; but the forces that were sent on those expeditions frequently betrayed their trust; and, in contempt of the orders which they had received flattered the rich in publick, while they scorned them in their hearts;

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and when, by this treachery, they had obtained the favour of Plutus, affected to look with an air of superiority on those who still remained in the service of WIT and LEARNING.

Disgusted with these desertions, the two rivals, at the same time, petitioned Jupiter for re-admission to their native habitations. Jupiter thundered on the right hand, and they prepared to obey the happy summons. WIT readily spread his wings and soared aloft, but not being able to see far, was bewildered in the pathless immensity of the ethereal spaces. LEARNING, who knew the way, shook her pinions; but for want of natural vigour could only take short flights: so, after many efforts, they both sunk again to the ground, and learned, from their mutual distress, the necessity of union. They therefore joined their hands, and renewed their flight: LEARNING was borne up by the vigour of WIT, and WIT guided by the perspicacity of LEARNING. They soon reached the dwellings of Jupiter, and were so endeared to each other, that they lived afterwards in perpetual concord. Wit persuaded LEARNING to converse with the GRACES, and LEARNING engaged WIT in the service of the VIRTUES. They were now the favourites of all the powers of heaven, and gladdened every banquet by their presence. They soon after married, at the command of Jupiter, and had a numerous progeny of ARTS and SCIENCES.

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NUMB. 23. TUESDAY, *June 5*, 1750.

Tres mihi convivæ prope dissentire videntur;
Poscentur vario multum diversa palato. HOR.

Three guests I have, dissenting at my feast,
Requiring each to gratify his taste
With different food. FRANCIS.

THAT every man should regulate his actions by his own conscience, without any regard to the opinions of the rest of the world, is one of the first precepts of moral prudence; justified not only by the suffrage of reason, which declares that none of the gifts of heaven are to lie useless, but by the voice likewise of experience, which will soon inform us that, if we make the praise or blame of others the rule of our conduct, we shall be distracted by a boundless variety of irreconcileable judgments, be held in perpetual suspence between contrary impulses, and consult for ever without determination.

I know not whether, for the same reason, it is not necessary for an author to place some confidence in his own skill, and to satisfy himself in the knowledge that he has not deviated from the established laws of composition, without submitting his works to frequent examinations before he gives them to the publick, or endeavouring to secure success by a solicitous conformity to advice and criticism.

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It is, indeed, quickly discoverable, that consultation and compliance can conduce little to the perfection of any literary performance; for whoever is so doubtful of his own abilities as to encourage the remarks of others, will find himself every day embarrassed with new difficulties, and will harass his mind, in vain, with the hopeless labour of uniting heterogeneous ideas, digesting independent hints, and collecting into one point the several rays of borrowed light, emitted often with contrary directions.

Of all authors, those who retail their labours in periodical sheets would be most unhappy, if they were much to regard the censures or the admonitions of their readers: for, as their works are not sent into the world at once, but by small parts in gradual succession, it is always imagined, by those who think themselves qualified to give instructions, that they may yet redeem their former failings by hearkening to better judges, and supply the deficiencies of their plan, by the help of the criticisms which are so liberally afforded.

I have had occasion to observe, sometimes with vexation, and sometimes with merriment, the different temper with which the same man reads a printed and manuscript performance. When a book is once in the hands of the publick, it is considered as permanent and unalterable; and the reader, if he be free from personal prejudices, takes it up with no other intention than of pleasing or instructing himself: he accommodates his mind to the author's design; and, having no interest in refusing the amusement that is offered him, never interrupts his own tranquillity by

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studied cavils, or destroys his satisfaction in that which is already well, by an anxious inquiry how it might be better; but is often contented without pleasure, and pleased without perfection.

But if the same man be called to consider the merit of a production yet unpublished, he brings an imagination heated with objections to passages which he has yet never heard; he invokes all the powers of criticism, and stores his memory with Taste and Grace, Purity and Delicacy, Manners and Unities, sounds which, having been once uttered by those that understood them, have been since re-echoed without meaning, and kept up to the disturbance of the world, by a constant repercussion from one coxcomb to another. He considers himself as obliged to shew, by some proof of his abilities, that he is not consulted to no purpose, and therefore watches every opening for objection, and looks round for every opportunity to propose some specious alteration. Such opportunities a very small degree of sagacity will enable him to find; for, in every work of imagination, the disposition of parts, the insertion of incidents, and use of decorations, may be varied a thousand ways with equal propriety; and as in things nearly equal, that will always seem best to every man which he himself produces; the critick, whose business is only to propose, without the care of execution, can never want the satisfaction of believing that he has suggested very important improvements, nor the power of enforcing his advice by arguments, which, as they appear convincing to himself, either his kindness or his vanity will press obstinately and

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importunately, without suspicion that he may possibly judge too hastily in favour of his own advice, or inquiry whether the advantage of the new scheme be proportionate to the labour.

It is observed by the younger Pliny, that an orator ought not so much to select the strongest arguments which his cause admits, as to employ all which his imagination can afford: for, in pleading, those reasons are of most value, which will most affect the judges; and the judges, says he, will be always most touched with that which they had before conceived. Every man who is called to give his opinion of a performance, decides upon the same principle; he first suffers himself to form expectations, and then is angry at his disappointment. He lets his imagination rove at large, and wonders that another, equally unconfined in the boundless ocean of possibility, takes a different course.

But, though the rule of Pliny be judiciously laid down, it is not applicable to the writer's cause, because there always lies an appeal from domestick criticism to a higher judicature, and the publick, which is never corrupted, nor often deceived, is to pass the last sentence upon literary claims.

Of the great force of preconceived opinions I had many proofs, when I first entered upon this weekly labour. My readers having, from the performances of my predecessors, established an idea of unconnected essays, to which they believed all future authors under a necessity of conforming, were impatient of the least deviation from their system, and numerous remonstrances were accordingly made

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by each, as he found his favourite subject omitted or delayed. Some were angry that the RAMBLER did not, like the SPECTATOR, introduce himself to the acquaintance of the publick, by an account of his own birth and studies, an enumeration of his adventures, and a description of his physiognomy. Others soon began to remark that he was a solemn, serious, dictatorial writer, without sprightliness or gaiety, and called out with vehemence for mirth and humour. Another admonished him to have a special eye upon the various clubs of this great city, and informed him that much of the Spectator's vivacity was laid out upon such assemblies. He has been censured for not imitating the politeness of his predecessors, having hitherto neglected to take the ladies under his protection, and give them rules for the just opposition of colours, and the proper dimensions of ruffles and pinners. He has been required by one to fix a particular censure upon those matrons who play at cards with spectacles: and another is very much offended whenever he meets with a speculation in which naked precepts are comprised without the illustration of examples and characters.

I make not the least question that all these monitors intend the promotion of my design, and the instruction of my readers; but they do not know, or do not reflect, that an author has a rule of choice peculiar to himself; and selects those subjects which he is best qualified to treat, by the course of his studies, or the accidents of his life; that some topicks of amusement have been already treated with

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too much success to invite a competition; and that he who endeavours to gain many readers must try various arts of invitation, essay every avenue of pleasure, and make frequent changes in his methods of approach.

I cannot but consider myself, amidst this tumult of criticism, as a ship in a poetical tempest, impelled at the same time by opposite winds, and dashed by the waves from every quarter, but held upright by the contrariety of the assailants, and secured in some measure by multiplicity of distress. Had the opinion of my censurers been unanimous, it might perhaps have overset my resolution; but since I find them at variance with each other, I can, without scruple, neglect them, and endeavour to gain the favour of the publick by following the direction of my own reason, and indulging the sallies of my own imagination.

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NUMB. 24. SATURDAY, *June* 9, 1750.

Nemo in sese tentat descendere. PERSIUS.
None, none descends into himself. DRYDEN.

AMONG the precepts, or aphorisms, admitted by general consent, and inculcated by frequent repetition, there is none more famous among the masters of ancient wisdom, than that compendious lesson, Γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, *Be acquainted with thyself;* ascribed by some to an oracle, and by others to Chilo of Lacedemon.

This is, indeed, a dictate, which, in the whole extent of its meaning, may be said to comprise all the speculation requisite to a moral agent. For what more can be necessary to the regulation of life, than the knowledge of our original, our end, our duties, and our relation to other beings?

It is however very improbable that the first author, whoever he was, intended to be understood in this unlimited and complicated sense; for of the inquiries, which in so large an acceptation it would seem to recommend, some are too extensive for the powers of man, and some require light from above, which was not yet indulged to the heathen world.

We might have had more satisfaction concerning the original import of this celebrated sentence, if history had informed us, whether it was uttered as a general instruction to mankind, or as a particular caution to some private inquirer; whether it was

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applied to some single occasion, or laid down as the universal rule of life.

There will occur, upon the slightest consideration, many possible circumstances, in which this monition might very properly be inforced: for every errour in human conduct must arise from ignorance in ourselves, either perpetual or temporary; and happen either because we do not know what is best and fittest, or because our knowledge is at the time of action not present to the mind.

When a man employs himself upon remote and unnecessary subjects, and wastes his life upon questions which cannot be resolved, and of which the solution would conduce very little to the advancement of happiness; when he lavishes his hours in calculating the weight of the terraqueous globe, or in adjusting successive systems of worlds beyond the reach of the telescope; he may be very properly recalled from his excursions by this precept, and reminded, that there is a nearer being with which it is his duty to be more acquainted; and from which his attention has hitherto been withheld by studies to which he has no other motive than vanity or curiosity.

The great praise of Socrates is, that he drew the wits of Greece, by his instruction and example, from the vain pursuit of natural philosophy to moral inquiries, and turned their thoughts from stars and tides, and matter and motion, upon the various modes of virtue, and relations of life. All his lectures were but commentaries upon this saying; if we suppose the knowledge of ourselves recommended

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by Chilo, in opposition to other inquiries less suitable to the state of man.

The great fault of men of learning is still, that they offend against this rule, and appear willing to study any thing rather than themselves; for which reason they are often despised by those with whom they imagine themselves above comparison; despised, as useless to common purposes, as unable to conduct the most trivial affairs, and unqualified to perform those offices by which the concatenation of society is preserved, and mutual tenderness excited and maintained.

Gelidus is a man of great penetration and deep researches. Having a mind naturally formed for the abstruser sciences, he can comprehend intricate combinations without confusion, and being of a temper naturally cool and equal, he is seldom interrupted by his passions in the pursuit of the longest chain of unexpected consequences. He has, therefore, a long time indulged hopes, that the solution of some problems, by which the professors of science have been hitherto baffled, is reserved for his genius and industry. He spends his time in the highest room of his house, into which none of his family are suffered to enter; and when he comes down to his dinner or his rest, he walks about like a stranger that is there only for a day, without any tokens of regard or tenderness. He has totally divested himself of all human sensations; he has neither eye for beauty, nor ear for complaint; he neither rejoices at the good fortune of his nearest friend, nor mourns for any publick or private calamity. Having once

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received a letter, and given it his servant to read, he was informed, that it was written by his brother, who, being shipwrecked, had swum naked to land, and was destitute of necessaries in a foreign country. Naked and destitute! says Gelidus, reach down the last volume of meteorological observations, extract an exact account of the wind, and note it carefully in the diary of the weather.

The family of Gelidus once broke into his study, to shew him that a town at a small distance was on fire; and in a few moments a servant came to tell him, that the flame had caught so many houses on both sides, that the inhabitants were confounded, and began to think of rather escaping with their lives, than saving their dwellings. What you tell me, says Gelidus, is very probable, for fire naturally acts in a circle.

Thus lives this great philosopher, insensible to every spectacle of distress, and unmoved by the loudest call of social nature, for want of considering that men are designed for the succour and comfort of each other; that though there are hours which may be laudably spent upon knowledge not immediately useful, yet the first attention is due to practical virtue; and that he may be justly driven out from the commerce of mankind, who has so far abstracted himself from the species, as to partake neither of the joys nor griefs of others, but neglects the endearments of his wife, and the caresses of his children, to count the drops of rain, note the changes of the wind, and calculate the eclipses of the moons of Jupiter.

I shall reserve to some future paper the religious and important meaning of this epitome of wisdom,

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and only remark, that it may be applied to the gay and light, as well as to the grave and solemn parts of life; and that not only the philosopher may forfeit his pretences to real learning, but the wit and beauty may miscarry in their schemes, by the want of this universal requisite, the knowledge of themselves.

It is surely for no other reason, that we see such numbers resolutely struggling against nature, and contending for that which they never can attain, endeavouring to unite contradictions, and determined to excel in characters inconsistent with each other; that stock-jobbers affect dress, gaiety and elegance, and mathematicians labour to be wits; that the soldier teazes his acquaintance with questions in theology, and the academick hopes to divert the ladies by a recital of his gallantries. That absurdity of pride could proceed only from ignorance of themselves, by which Garth attempted criticism, and Congreve waved his title to dramatick reputation, and desired to be considered only as a gentleman.

Euphues, with great parts, and extensive knowledge, has a clouded aspect, and ungracious form; yet it has been his ambition, from his first entrance into life, to distinguish himself by particularities in his dress, to outvie beaux in embroidery, to import new trimmings, and to be foremost in the fashion. Euphues has turned on his exterior appearance, that attention which would always have produced esteem, had it been fixed upon his mind; and though his virtues and abilities have preserved him from the contempt which he has so diligently solicited, he has, at least, raised one impediment to his reputation;

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since all can judge of his dress, but few of his understanding; and many who discern that he is a fop, are unwilling to believe that he can be wise.

There is one instance in which the ladies are particularly unwilling to observe the rule of Chilo. They are desirous to hide from themselves the advances of age, and endeavour too frequently to supply the sprightliness and bloom of youth by artificial beauty and forced vivacity. They hope to inflame the heart by glances which have lost their fire, or melt it by languor which is no longer delicate; they play over the airs which pleased at a time when they were expected only to please, and forget that airs in time ought to give place to virtues. They continue to trifle, because they could once trifle agreeably, till those who shared their early pleasures are withdrawn to more serious engagements; and are scarcely awakened from their dream of perpetual youth, but by the scorn of those whom they endeavour to rival*.

* Mrs. Piozzi says, that by Gelidus, in this paper, the author meant to represent Mr. Coulson, a mathematician, who formerly lived at Rochester. This is not very probable, if we consider the character Davies gives of Mr. Coulson (Colson) in his Life of Garrick, which was certainly written under Dr. Johnson's inspection, and, what relates to Colson, probably from his information. C.

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NUMB. 25. TUESDAY, *June* 12, 1750.

Possunt quia posse videntur. VIRGIL.

For they can conquer who believe they can. DRYDEN.

THERE are some vices and errours which, though often fatal to those in whom they are found, have yet, by the universal consent of mankind, been considered as intitled to some degree of respect, or have, at least, been exempted from contemptuous infamy, and condemned by the severest moralists with pity rather than detestation.

A constant and invariable example of this general partiality will be found in the different regard which has always been shewn to rashness and cowardice, two vices, of which, though they may be conceived equally distant from the middle point, where true fortitude is placed, and may equally injure any publick or private interest, yet the one is never mentioned without some kind of veneration, and the other always considered as a topick of unlimited and licentious censure, on which all the virulence of reproach may be lawfully exerted.

The same distinction is made, by the common suffrage, between profusion and avarice, and, perhaps, between many other opposite vices; and, as I have found reason to pay great regard to the voice of the people, in cases where knowledge has been forced upon them by experience, without long deductions or deep researches, I am inclined to believe that this

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distribution of respect is not without some agreement with the nature of things; and that in the faults, which are thus invested with extraordinary privileges, there are generally some latent principles of merit, some possibilities of future virtue, which may, by degrees, break from obstruction, and by time and opportunity be brought into act.

It may be laid down as an axiom, that it is more easy to take away superfluities than to supply defects; and therefore he that is culpable, because he has passed the middle point of virtue, is always accounted a fairer object of hope, than he who fails by falling short. The one has all that perfection requires, and more, but the excess may be easily retrenched; the other wants the qualities requisite to excellence, and who can tell how he shall obtain them? We are certain that the horse may be taught to keep pace with his fellows, whose fault is that he leaves them behind. We know that a few strokes of the axe will lop a cedar; but what arts of cultivation can elevate a shrub?

To walk with circumspection and steadiness in the right path, at an equal distance between the extremes of errour, ought to be the constant endeavour of every reasonable being; nor can I think those teachers of moral wisdom much to be honoured as benefactors to mankind, who are always enlarging upon the difficulty of our duties, and providing rather excuses for vice, than incentives to virtue.

But, since to most it will happen often, and to all sometimes, that there will be a deviation towards one side or the other, we ought always to employ our

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vigilance, with most attention, on that enemy from which there is the greatest danger, and to stray, if we must stray, towards those parts from whence we may quickly and easily return.

Among other opposite qualities of the mind, which may become dangerous, though in different degrees, I have often had occasion to consider the contrary effects of presumption and despondency; of heady confidence, which promises victory without contest, and heartless pusillanimity, which shrinks back from the thought of great undertakings, confounds difficulty with impossibility, and considers all advancement towards any new attainment as irreversibly prohibited.

Presumption will be easily corrected. Every experiment will teach caution, and miscarriages will hourly shew, that attempts are not always rewarded with success. The most precipitate ardour will, in time, be taught the necessity of methodical gradation and preparatory measures; and the most daring confidence be convinced that neither merit, nor abilities, can command events.

It is the advantage of vehemence and activity, that they are always hastening to their own reformation; because they incite us to try whether our expectations are well grounded, and therefore detect the deceits which they are apt to occasion. But timidity is a disease of the mind more obstinate and fatal; for a man once persuaded that any impediment is insuperable, has given it, with respect to himself, that strength and weight which it had not before. He can scarcely strive with vigour and perseverance, when he has no

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hope of gaining the victory; and since he never will try his strength, can never discover the unreasonableness of his fears.

There is often to be found in men devoted to literature a kind of intellectual cowardice, which whoever converses much among them, may observe frequently to depress the alacrity of enterprise, and, by consequence, to retard the improvement of science. They have annexed to every species of knowledge some chimerical character of terrour and inhibition, which they transmit, without much reflection, from one to another; they first fright themselves, and then propagate the panick to their scholars and acquaintance. One study is inconsistent with a lively imagination, another with a solid judgment; one is improper in the early parts of life, another requires so much time, that it is not to be attempted at an advanced age; one is dry and contracts the sentiments, another is diffuse and overburdens the memory; one is insufferable to taste and delicacy, and another wears out life in the study of words, and is useless to a wise man, who desires only the knowledge of things.

But of all the bugbears by which the *Infantes barbati*, boys both young and old, have been hitherto frighted from digressing into new tracts of learning, none has been more mischievously efficacious than an opinion that every kind of knowledge requires a peculiar genius, or mental constitution, framed for the reception of some ideas, and the exclusion of others; and that to him whose genius is not adapted to the study which he prosecutes, all labour shall be vain and

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fruitless, vain as an endeavour to mingle oil and water, or, in the language of chemistry, to amalgamate bodies of heterogeneous principles.

This opinion we may reasonably suspect to have been propagated, by vanity, beyond the truth. It is natural for those who have raised a reputation by any science, to exalt themselves as endowed by heaven with peculiar powers, or marked out by an extraordinary designation for their profession; and to fright competitors away by representing the difficulties with which they must contend, and the necessity of qualities which are supposed to be not generally conferred, and which no man can know, but by experience, whether he enjoys.

To this discouragement it may be possibly answered, that since a genius, whatever it be, is like fire in the flint, only to be produced by collision with a proper subject, it is the business of every man to try whether his faculties may not happily co-operate with his desires; and since they whose proficiency he admires, knew their own force only by the event, he needs but engage in the same undertaking with equal spirit, and may reasonably hope for equal success.

There is another species of false intelligence, given by those who profess to shew the way to the summit of knowledge, of equal tendency to depress the mind with false distrust of itself, and weaken it by needless solicitude and dejection. When a scholar whom they desire to animate, consults them at his entrance on some new study, it is common to make flattering representations of its pleasantness and facility. Thus they generally attain one of two

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ends almost equally desirable; they either incite his industry by elevating his hopes, or produce a high opinion of their own abilities, since they are supposed to relate only what they have found, and to have proceeded with no less ease then they promise to their followers.

The student, inflamed by this encouragement, sets forward in the new path, and proceeds a few steps with great alacrity, but he soon finds asperities and intricacies of which he has not been forewarned, and imagining that none ever were so entangled or fatigued before him, sinks suddenly into despair, and desists as from an expedition in which fate opposes him. Thus his terrours are multiplied by his hopes, and he is defeated without resistance, because he had no expectation of an enemy.

Of these treacherous instructors, the one destroys industry, by declaring that industry is vain, the other by representing it as needless; the one cuts away the root of hope, the other raises it only to be blasted: the one confines his pupil to the shore, by telling him that his wreck is certain, the other sends him to sea, without preparing him for tempests.

False hopes and false terrours are equally to be avoided. Every man who proposes to grow eminent by learning, should carry in his mind, at once, the difficulty of excellence, and the force of industry; and remember that fame is not conferred but as the recompence of labour, and that labour vigorously continued, has not often failed of its reward.

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NUMB. 26. SATURDAY, *June* 14, 1750.

Ingentes dominos, et claræ nomina famæ,
Illustrique graves nobilitate domos
Devita, et longè cautus fuge; contrahe vela,
Et te littoribus cymba propinqua vehat. SENECA.

Each mighty lord, big with a pompous name,
And each high house of fortune and of fame,
With caution fly; contract thy ample sails,
And near the shore improve the gentle gales.
ELPHINSTON.

MR. RAMBLER,

IT is usual for men, engaged in the same pursuits, to be inquisitive after the conduct and fortune of each other; and, therefore, I suppose it will not be unpleasing to you, to read an account of the various changes which have happened in part of a life devoted to literature. My narrative will not exhibit any great variety of events, or extraordinary revolutions; but may, perhaps, be not less useful, because I shall relate nothing which is not likely to happen to a thousand others.

I was born heir to a very small fortune, and left by my father, whom I cannot remember, to the care of an uncle. He having no children, always treated me as his son, and finding in me those qualities which old men easily discover in sprightly children, when they happen to love them, declared that a genius like mine should never be lost for want of

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cultivation. He therefore placed me, for the usual time, at a great school, and then sent me to the university, with a larger allowance than my own patrimony would have afforded, that I might not keep mean company, but learn to become my dignity when I should be made lord chancellor, which he often lamented, that the increase of his infirmities was very likely to preclude him from seeing.

This exuberance of money displayed itself in gaiety of appearance, and wantonness of expence, and introduced me to the acquaintance of those whom the same superfluity of fortune betrayed to the same licence and ostentation: young heirs, who pleased themselves with a remark very frequent in their mouths, that though they were sent by their fathers to the university, they were not under the necessity of living by their learning.

Among men of this class I easily obtained the reputation of a great genius, and was persuaded, that with such liveliness of imagination, and delicacy of sentiment, I should never be able to submit to the drudgery of the law. I therefore gave myself wholly to the more airy and elegant parts of learning, and was often so much elated with my superiority to the youths with whom I conversed, that I began to listen, with great attention, to those that recommended to me a wider and more conspicuous theatre; and was particularly touched with an observation made by one of my friends; That it was not by lingering in the university that Prior became ambassador, or Addison secretary of state.

This desire was hourly increased by the solicitation

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of my companions, who removing one by one to London, as the caprice of their relations allowed them, or the legal dismission from the hands of their guardians put it in their power, never failed to send an account of the beauty and felicity of the new world, and to remonstrate how much was lost by every hour's continuance in a place of retirement and constraint.

My uncle in the mean time frequently harassed me with monitory letters, which I sometimes neglected to open for a week after I received them, and generally read in a tavern, with such comments as might shew how much I was superiour to instruction or advice. I could not but wonder how a man confined to the country, and unacquainted with the present system of things, should imagine himself qualified to instruct a rising genius, born to give laws to the age, refine its taste, and multiply its pleasures.

The postman, however, still continued to bring me new remonstrances; for my uncle was very little depressed by the ridicule and reproach which he never heard. But men of parts have quick resentments; it was impossible to bear his usurpations for ever; and I resolved, once for all, to make him an example to those who imagine themselves wise because they are old, and to teach young men, who are too tame under representation, in what manner grey-bearded insolence ought to be treated. I therefore one evening took my pen in hand, and after having animated myself with a catch, wrote a general answer to all his precepts with such vivacity of turn, such elegance of irony, and such asperity of sarcasm, that I convulsed a large company with universal laughter, disturbed

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the neighbourhood with vociferations of applause, and five days afterwards was answered, that I must be content to live on my own estate.

This contraction of my income gave me no disturbance; for a genius like mine was out of the reach of want. I had friends that would be proud to open their purses at my call, and prospects of such advancement as would soon reconcile my uncle, whom, upon mature deliberation, I resolved to receive into favour without insisting on any acknowledgment of his offence, when the splendour of my condition should induce him to wish for my countenance. I therefore went up to London, before I had shewn the alteration of my condition by any abatement of my way of living, and was received by all my academical acquaintance with triumph and congratulation. I was immediately introduced among the wits and men of spirit; and in a short time had divested myself of all my scholar's gravity, and obtained the reputation of a pretty fellow.

You will easily believe that I had no great knowledge of the world; yet I had been hindered, by the general disinclination every man feels to confess poverty, from telling to any one the resolution of my uncle, and for some time subsisted upon the stock of money which I had brought with me, and contributed my share as before to all our entertainments. But my pocket was soon emptied, and I was obliged to ask my friends for a small sum. This was a favour, which we had often reciprocally received from one another; they supposed my wants only accidental, and therefore willingly supplied them. In a short

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time I found a necessity of asking again, and was again treated with the same civility; but the third time they began to wonder what that old rogue my uncle could mean by sending a gentleman to town without money; and when they gave me what I asked for, advised me to stipulate for more regular remittances.

This somewhat disturbed my dream of constant affluence; but I was three days after completely awaked; for entering the tavern where they met every evening, I found the waiters remitted their complaisance, and, instead of contending to light me up stairs, suffered me to wait for some minutes by the bar. When I came to my company, I found them unusually grave and formal, and one of them took the hint to turn the conversation upon the misconduct of young men, and enlarged upon the folly of frequenting the company of men of fortune, without being able to support the expence, an observation which the rest contributed either to enforce by repetition, or to illustrate by examples. Only one of them tried to divert the discourse, and endeavoured to direct my attention to remote questions, and common topicks.

A man guilty of poverty easily believes himself suspected. I went, however, next morning to breakfast with him who appeared ignorant of the drift of the conversation, and by a series of inquiries, drawing still nearer to the point, prevailed on him, not, perhaps, much against his will, to inform me that Mr. *Dash*, whose father was a wealthy attorney near my native place, had, the morning before, received

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an account of my uncle's resentment, and communicated his intelligence with the utmost industry of groveling insolence.

It was now no longer practicable to consort with my former friends, unless I would be content to be used as an inferior guest, who was to pay for his wine by mirth and flattery; a character which, if I could not escape it, I resolved to endure only among those who had never known me in the pride of plenty. I changed my lodgings, and frequented the coffee-houses in a different region of the town; where I was very quickly distinguished by several young gentlemen of high birth, and large estates, and began again to amuse my imagination with hopes of preferment, though not quite so confidently as when I had less experience.

The first great conquest which this new scene enabled me to gain over myself was, when I submitted to confess to a party, who invited me to an expensive diversion, that my revenues were not equal to such golden pleasures; they would not suffer me, however, to stay behind, and with great reluctance I yielded to be treated. I took that opportunity of recommending myself to some office or employment, which they unanimously promised to procure me by their joint interest.

I had now entered into a state of dependence, and had hopes, or fears, from almost every man I saw. If it be unhappy to have one patron, what is his misery who has many? I was obliged to comply with a thousand caprices, to concur in a thousand follies, and to countenance a thousand errours. I endured

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innumerable mortifications, if not from cruelty, at least from negligence, which will creep in upon the kindest and most delicate minds, when they converse without the mutual awe of equal condition. I found the spirit and vigour of liberty every moment sinking in me, and a servile fear of displeasing stealing by degrees upon all my behaviour, till no word, or look, or action, was my own. As the solicitude to please increased, the power of pleasing grew less, and I was always clouded with diffidence where it was most my interest and wish to shine.

My patrons, considering me as belonging to the community, and, therefore, not the charge of any particular person, made no scruple of neglecting any opportunity of promoting me, which every one thought more properly the business of another. An account of my expectations and disappointments, and the succeeding vicissitudes of my life, I shall give you in my following letter, which will be, I hope, of use to shew how ill he forms his schemes, who expects happiness without freedom.

I am, &c.

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NUMB. 27. TUESDAY, *June* 19, 1750.

——— *Pauperiem metuens potiore metallis*
Libertate caret.—— HOR.

So he, who poverty with horror views,
Who sells his freedom in exchange for gold,
(Freedom for mines of wealth too cheaply sold)
Shall make eternal servitude his fate,
And feel a haughty master's galling weight. FRANCIS.

MR. RAMBLER,

As it is natural for every man to think himself of importance, your knowledge of the world will incline you to forgive me, if I imagine your curiosity so much excited by the former part of my narration, as to make you desire that I should proceed without any unnecessary arts of connection. I shall, therefore, not keep you longer in such suspense, as perhaps my performance may not compensate.

In the gay company with which I was now united, I found those allurements and delights, which the friendship of young men always affords; there was that openness which naturally produced confidence, that affability which, in some measure, softened dependance, and that ardour of profession which incited hope. When our hearts were dilated with merriment, promises were poured out with unlimited profusion, and life and fortune were but a scanty sacrifice to friendship; but when the hour came, at

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which any effort was to be made, I had generally the vexation to find that my interest weighed nothing against the slightest amusement, and that every petty avocation was found a sufficient plea for continuing me in uncertainty and want. Their kindness was indeed sincere: when they promised, they had no intention to deceive; but the same juvenile warmth which kindled their benevolence, gave force in the same proportion to every other passion, and I was forgotten as soon as any new pleasures seized on their attention.

Vagario told me one evening, that all my perplexities should be soon at an end, and desired me, from that instant, to throw upon him all care of my fortune, for a post of considerable value was that day become vacant, and he knew his interest sufficient to procure it in the morning. He desired me to call on him early, that he might be dressed soon enough to wait on the minister before any other application should be made. I came as he appointed, with all the flame of gratitude, and was told by his servant, that having found at his lodgings, when he came home, an acquaintance who was going to travel, he had been pursuaded to accompany him to Dover, and that they had taken post-horses two hours before day.

I was once very near to preferment, by the kindness of Charinus, who, at my request, went to beg a place, which he thought me likely to fill with great reputation, and in which I should have many opportunities of promoting his interest in return; and he pleased himself with imagining the mutual

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benefits that we should confer, and the advances that we should make by our united strength. Away therefore he went, equally warm with friendship and ambition, and left me to prepare acknowledgments against his return. At length he came back, and told me that he had met in his way a party going to breakfast in the country, that the ladies importuned him too much to be refused, and that having passed the morning with them, he was come back to dress himself for a ball, to which he was invited for the evening.

I have suffered several disappointments from tailors and periwig-makers, who, by neglecting to perform their work, withheld my patrons from court; and once failed of an establishment for life by the delay of a servant, sent to a neighbouring shop to replenish a snuff-box.

At last I thought my solicitude at an end, for an office fell into the gift of Hippodamus's father, who being then in the country, could not very speedily fill it, and whose fondness would not have suffered him to refuse his son a less reasonable request. Hippodamus therefore set forward with great expedition, and I expected every hour an account of his success. A long time I waited without any intelligence, but at last received a letter from Newmarket, by which I was informed that the races were begun, and I knew the vehemence of his passions too well to imagine that he could refuse himself his favourite amusement.

You will not wonder that I was at last weary of the patronage of young men, especially as I found

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them not generally to promise much greater fidelity as they advanced in life; for I observed that what they gained in steadiness they lost in benevolence, and grew colder to my interest as they became more diligent to promote their own. I was convinced that their liberality was only profuseness, that as chance directed, they were equally generous to vice and virtue, that they were warm but because they were thoughtless, and counted the support of a friend only amongst other gratifications of passion.

My resolution was now to ingratiate myself with men whose reputation was established, whose high stations enabled them to prefer me, and whose age exempted them from sudden changes of inclination. I was considered as a man of parts, and therefore easily found admission to the table of Hilarius, the celebrated orator, renowned equally for the extent of his knowledge, the elegance of his diction, and the acuteness of his wit. Hilarius received me with an appearance of great satisfaction, produced to me all his friends, and directed to me that part of his discourse in which he most endeavoured to display his imagination. I had now learned my own interest enough to supply him opportunities for smart remarks and gay sallies, which I never failed to echo and applaud. Thus I was gaining every hour on his affections, till unfortunately, when the assembly was more splendid than usual, his desire of admiration prompted him to turn his raillery upon me. I bore it for some time with great submission, and success encouraged him to redouble his attacks; at last my vanity prevailed over my prudence, I retorted

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his irony with such spirit, that Hilarius, unaccustomed to resistance, was disconcerted, and soon found means of convincing me that his purpose was not to encourage a rival, but to foster a parasite.

I was then taken into the familiarity of Argutio, a nobleman eminent for judgment and criticism. He had contributed to my reputation by the praises which he had often bestowed upon my writings, in which he owned that there were proofs of a genius that might rise to high degrees of excellence, when time, or information, had reduced its exuberance. He therefore required me to consult him before the publication of any new performance, and commonly proposed innumerable alterations, without sufficient attention to the general design, or regard to my form of style, and mode of imagination. But these corrections he never failed to press as indispensably necessary, and thought the least delay of compliance an act of rebellion. The pride of an author made this treatment insufferable, and I thought any tyranny easier to be borne than that which took from me the use of my understanding.

My next patron was Eutyches, the statesman, who was wholly engaged in publick affairs, and seemed to have no ambition but to be powerful and rich. I found his favour more permanent than that of the others; for there was a certain price at which it might be bought; he allowed nothing to humour, or to affection, but was always ready to pay liberally for the service that he required. His demands were, indeed, very often such as virtue could not easily consent to gratify; but virtue is not be consulted

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when men are to raise their fortunes by the favour of the great. His measures were censured; I wrote in his defence, and was recompensed with a place, of which the profits were never received by me without the pangs of remembering that they were the reward of wickedness,—a reward which nothing but that necessity which the consumption of my little estate in these wild pursuits had brought upon me, hindered me from throwing back in the face of my corrupter.

At this time my uncle died without a will, and I became heir to a small fortune. I had resolution to throw off the splendour which reproached me to myself, and retire to an humbler state, in which I am now endeavouring to recover the dignity of virtue, and hope to make some reparation for my crime and follies, by informing others, who may be led after the same pageants, that they are about to engage in a course of life, in which they are to purchase, by a thousand miseries, the privilege of repentance.

I am, &c.

EUBULUS.

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NUMB. 28. SATURDAY, *June* 23, 1750.

Illi mors gravis incubat,
Qui, notus nimis omnibus,
Ignotus moritur sibi. SENECA.

To him! alas! to him, I fear,
The face of death will terrible appear,
Who in his life, flattering his senseless pride,
By being known to all the world beside,
Does not himself, when he is dying, know,
Nor what he is, nor whither he's to go. COWLEY.

I HAVE shewn, in a late essay, to what errours men are hourly betrayed by a mistaken opinion of their own powers, and a negligent inspection of their own character. But as I then confined my observations to common occurrences and familiar scenes, I think it proper to inquire, how far a nearer acquaintance with ourselves is necessary to our preservation from crimes as well as follies, and how much the attentive study of our own minds may contribute to secure to us the approbation of that Being, to whom we are accountable for our thoughts and our actions, and whose favour must finally constitute our total happiness.

If it be reasonable to estimate the difficulty of any enterprise by frequent miscarriages, it may justly be concluded that it is not easy for a man to know himself; for wheresoever we turn our view, we shall find almost all with whom we converse so nearly as to judge of their sentiments, indulging more favourable conceptions of their own virtue than they have been

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able to impress upon others, and congratulating themselves upon degrees of excellence, which their fondest admirers cannot allow them to have attained.

Those representations of imaginary virtue are generally considered as arts of hypocrisy, and as snares laid for confidence and praise. But I believe the suspicion often unjust; those who thus propagate their own reputation, only extend the fraud by which they have been themselves deceived; for this failing is incident to numbers, who seem to live without designs, competitions, or pursuits; it appears on occasions which promise no accession of honour or of profit, and to persons from whom very little is to be hoped or feared. It is, indeed, not easy to tell how far we may be blinded by the love of ourselves, when we reflect how much a secondary passion can cloud our judgment, and how few faults a man, in the first raptures of love, can discover in the person or conduct of his mistress.

To lay open all the sources from which errour flows in upon him who contemplates his own character, would require more exact knowledge of the human heart, than, perhaps, the most acute and laborious observers have acquired. And since falsehood may be diversified without end, it is not unlikely that every man admits an imposture in some respect peculiar to himself, as his views have been accidentally directed, or his ideas particularly combined.

Some fallacies, however, there are, more frequently insidious, which it may, perhaps, not be useless to detect; because, though they are gross, they may be

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fatal, and because nothing but attention is necessary to defeat them.

One sophism by which men persuade themselves that they have those virtues which they really want, is formed by the substitution of single acts for habits. A miser who once relieved a friend from the danger of a prison, suffers his imagination to dwell for ever upon his own heroic generosity; he yields his heart up to indignation at those who are blind to merit, or insensible to misery, and who can please themselves with the enjoyment of that wealth, which they never permit others to partake. From any censures of the world, or reproaches of his conscience, he has an appeal to action and to knowledge: and though his whole life is a course of rapacity and avarice, he concludes himself to be tender and liberal, because he has once performed an act of liberality and tenderness.

As a glass which magnifies objects by the approach of one end to the eye, lessens them by the application of the other, so vices are extenuated by the inversion of that fallacy, by which virtues are augmented. Those faults which we cannot conceal from our own notice, are considered, however frequent, not as habitual corruptions, or settled practices, but as casual failures, and single lapses. A man who has from year to year set his country to sale, either for the gratification of his ambition or resentment, confesses that the heat of party now and then betrays the severest virtue to measures that cannot be seriously defended. He that spends his days and nights in riot and debauchery, owns that his passions oftentimes overpower his resolutions. But each comforts himself that his

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faults are not without precedent, for the best and the wisest men have given way to the violence of sudden temptations.

There are men who always confound the praise of goodness with the practice, and who believe themselves mild and moderate, charitable and faithful, because they have exerted their eloquence in commendation of mildness, fidelity, and other virtues. This is an errour almost universal among those that converse much with dependents, with such whose fear or interest disposes them to a seeming reverence for any declamation, however enthusiastick, and submission to any boast, however arrogant. Having none to recall their attention to their lives, they rate themselves by the goodness of their opinions, and forget how much more easily men may shew their virtue in their talk than in their actions.

The tribe is likewise very numerous of those who regulate their lives, not by the standard of religion, but the measure of other men's virtue; who lull their own remorse with the remembrance of crimes more atrocious than their own, and seem to believe that they are not bad while another can be found worse.

For escaping these and a thousand other deceits, many expedients have been proposed. Some have recommended the frequent consultation of a wise friend, admitted to intimacy, and encouraged to sincerity. But this appears a remedy by no means adapted to general use: for in order to secure the virtue of one, it presupposes more virtue in two than will generally be found. In the first, such a desire of rectitude and amendment, as may incline

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him to hear his own accusation from the mouth of him whom he esteems, and by whom, therefore, he will always hope that his faults are not discovered; and in the second, such zeal and honesty, as will make him content for his friend's advantage to lose his kindness.

A long life may be passed without finding a friend in whose understanding and virtue we can equally confide, and whose opinion we can value at once for its justness and sincerity. A weak man, however honest, is not qualified to judge. A man of the world, however penetrating, is not fit to counsel. Friends are often chosen for similitude of manners, and therefore each palliates the other's failings, because they are his own. Friends are tender, and unwilling to give pain, or they are interested, and fearful to offend.

These objections have inclined others to advise, that he who would know himself, should consult his enemies, remember the reproaches that are vented to his face, and listen for the censures that are uttered in private. For his great business is to know his faults, and those malignity will discover, and resentment will reveal. But this precept may be often frustrated; for it seldom happens that rivals or opponents are suffered to come near enough to know our conduct with so much exactness as that conscience should allow and reflect the accusation. The charge of an enemy is often totally false, and commonly so mingled with falsehood, that the mind takes advantage from the failure of one part to discredit the rest, and never suffers any disturbance afterward from such partial reports.

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Yet it seems that enemies have been always found by experience the most faithful monitors; for adversity has ever been considered as the state in which a man most easily becomes acquainted with himself, and this effect it must produce by withdrawing flatterers, whose business it is to hide our weaknesses from us, or by giving loose to malice, and licence to reproach; or at least by cutting off those pleasures which called us away from meditation on our own conduct, and repressing that pride which too easily persuades us that we merit whatever we enjoy.

Part of these benefits it is in every man's power to procure to himself, by assigning proper portions of his life to the examination of the rest, and by putting himself frequently in such a situation, by retirement and abstraction, as may weaken the influence of external objects. By this practice he may obtain the solitude of adversity without its melancholy, its instructions without its censures, and its sensibility without its perturbations.

The necessity of setting the world at a distance from us, when we are to take a survey of ourselves, has sent many from high stations to the severities of a monastic life; and, indeed, every man deeply engaged in business, if all regard to another state be not extinguished, must have the conviction, though, perhaps, not the resolution of Valdesso, who, when he solicited Charles the Fifth to dismiss him, being asked, whether he retired upon disgust, answered that he laid down his commission for no other reason but because *there ought to be some time for sober reflection between the life of a soldier and his death.*

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There are few conditions which do not entangle us with sublunary hopes and fears, from which it is necessary to be at intervals disencumbered, that we may place ourselves in his presence who views effects in their causes, and actions in their motives; that we may, as Chillingworth expresses it, consider things as if there were no other beings in the world but God and ourselves; or, to use language yet more awful, *may commune with our own hearts, and be still.*

Death, says Seneca, falls heavy upon him who is too much known to others, and too little to himself; and Pontanus, a man celebrated among the early restorers of literature, thought the study of our own hearts of so much importance, that he has recommended it from his tomb. *Sum* Joannes Jovianus Pontanus, *quem amaverunt bonæ musæ, suspexerunt viri probi, honestaverunt reges domini; jam scis qui sim, vel qui potius fuerim; ego vero te, hospes, noscere in tenebris nequeo, sed teipsum ut noscas rogo.* "I am Pontanus, beloved by the powers of literature, admired by men of worth, and dignified by the monarchs of the world. Thou knowest now who I am, or more properly who I was. For thee, stranger, I who am in darkness cannot know thee, but I intreat thee to know thyself."

I hope every reader of this paper will consider himself as engaged to the observation of a precept, which the wisdom and virtue of all ages have concurred to enforce: a precept, dictated by philosophers, inculcated by poets, and ratified by saints.

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NUMB. 29. TUESDAY, *June* 26, 1750.

Prudens futuri temporis exitum
Caliginosa nocte premit Deus,
Ridetque si mortalis ultra
Fas trepidet—— HOR.

But God has wisely hid from human sight
The dark decrees of future fate,
And sown their seeds in depth of night;
He laughs at all the giddy turns of state,
When mortals search too soon, and fear too late.
DRYDEN.

THERE is nothing recommended with greater frequency among the gayer poets of antiquity, than the secure possession of the present hour, and the dismission of all the cares which intrude upon our quiet, or hinder, by importunate perturbations, the enjoyment of those delights which our condition happens to set before us.

The ancient poets are, indeed, by no means unexceptionable teachers of morality; their precepts are to be always considered as the sallies of a genius, intent rather upon giving pleasure than instruction, eager to take every advantage of insinuation, and, provided the passions can be engaged on its side, very little solicitous about the suffrage of reason.

The darkness and uncertainty through which the heathens were compelled to wander in the pursuit of happiness, may, indeed, be alleged as an excuse for many of their seducing invitations to immediate enjoyment, which the moderns, by whom they have

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been imitated, have not to plead. It is no wonder that such as had no promise of another state should eagerly turn their thoughts upon the improvement of that which was before them; but surely those who are acquainted with the hopes and fears of eternity, might think it necessary to put some restraint upon their imagination, and reflect that by echoing the songs of the ancient bacchanals, and transmitting the maxims of past debauchery, they not only prove that they want invention, but virtue, and submit to the servility of imitation only to copy that of which the writer, if he was to live now, would often be ashamed.

Yet as the errours and follies of a great genius are seldom without some radiations of understanding, by which meaner minds may be enlightened, the incitements to pleasure are, in those authors, generally mingled with such reflections upon life, as well deserve to be considered distinctly from the purposes for which they are produced, and to be treasured up as the settled conclusions of extensive observation, acute sagacity, and mature experience.

It is not without true judgment, that on these occasions they often warn their readers against inquiries into futurity, and solicitude about events which lie hid in causes yet unactive, and which time has not brought forward into the view of reason. An idle and thoughtless resignation to chance, without any struggle against calamity, or endeavour after advantage, is indeed below the dignity of a reasonable being, in whose power Providence has put a great part even of his present happiness; but it shews an equal ignorance of our proper

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sphere, to harass our thoughts with conjectures about things not yet in being. How can we regulate events, of which we yet know not whether they will ever happen? And why should we think, with painful anxiety, about that on which our thoughts can have no influence?

It is a maxim commonly received, that a wise man is never surprized; and, perhaps, this exemption from astonishment may be imagined to proceed from such a prospect into futurity, as gave previous intimation of those evils which often fall unexpected upon others that have less foresight. But the truth is, that things to come, except when they approach very nearly, are equally hidden from men of all degrees of understanding; and if a wise man is not amazed at sudden occurrences, it is not that he has thought more, but less upon futurity. He never considered things not yet existing as the proper objects of his attention; he never indulged dreams till he was deceived by their phantoms, nor ever realized nonentities to his mind. He is not surprized, because he is not disappointed; and he escapes disappointment, because he never forms any expectations.

The concern about things to come, that is so justly censured, is not the result of those general reflections on the variableness of fortune, the uncertainty of life, and the universal insecurity of all human acquisitions, which must always be suggested by the view of the world; but such a desponding anticipation of misfortune, as fixes the mind upon scenes of gloom and melancholy, and makes fear predominate in every imagination.

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Anxiety of this kind is nearly of the same nature with jealousy in love, and suspicion in the general commerce of life; a temper which keeps the man always in alarms; disposes him to judge of every thing in a manner that least favours his own quiet, fills him with perpetual stratagems of counteraction, wears him out in schemes to obviate evils which never threatened him, and at length, perhaps, contributes to the production of those mischiefs of which it had raised such dreadful apprehensions.

It has been usual in all ages for moralists to repress the swellings of vain hope, by representations of the innumerable casualties to which life is subject, and by instances of the unexpected defeat of the wisest schemes of policy, and sudden subversions of the highest eminences of greatness. It has, perhaps, not been equally observed, that all these examples afford the proper antidote to fear as well as to hope, and may be applied with no less efficacy as consolations to the timorous, than as restraints to the proud.

Evil is uncertain in the same degree as good, and for the reason that we ought not to hope too securely, we ought not to fear with too much dejection. The state of the world is continually changing, and none can tell the result of the next vicissitude. Whatever is afloat in the stream of time, may, when it is very near us, be driven away by an accidental blast, which shall happen to cross the general course of the current. The sudden accidents by which the powerful are depressed, may fall upon those whose malice we fear; and the greatness by which we expect to be overborne, may become another proof of the false

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flatteries of fortune. Our enemies may become weak, or we grow strong before our encounter, or we may advance against each other without ever meeting. There are, indeed, natural evils which we can flatter ourselves with no hopes of escaping, and with little of delaying; but of the ills which are apprehended from human malignity, or the opposition of rival interests, we may always alleviate the terrour by considering that our persecutors are weak and ignorant, and mortal like ourselves.

The misfortunes which arise from the concurrence of unhappy incidents should never be suffered to disturb us before they happen; because, if the breast be once laid open to the dread of mere possibilities of misery, life must be given a prey to dismal solicitude, and quiet must be lost for ever.

It is remarked by old Cornaro, that it is absurd to be afraid of the natural dissolution of the body, because it must certainly happen, and can, by no caution or artifice, be avoided. Whether this sentiment be entirely just, I shall not examine; but certainly if it be improper to fear events which must happen, it is yet more evidently contrary to right reason to fear those which may never happen, and which, if they should come upon us, we cannot resist.

As we ought not to give way to fear, any more than indulgence to hope, because the objects both of fear and hope are yet uncertain, so we ought not to trust the representations of one more than of the other, because they are both equally fallacious; as hope enlarges happiness, fear aggravates calamity.

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It is generally allowed, that no man ever found the happiness of possession proportionate to that expectation which incited his desire, and invigorated his pursuit; nor has any man found the evils of life so formidable in reality, as they were described to him by his own imagination: every species of distress brings with it some peculiar supports, some unforeseen means of resisting, or power of enduring. Taylor justly blames some pious persons, who indulge their fancies too much, set themselves, by the force of imagination, in the place of the ancient martyrs and confessors, and question the validity of their own faith, because they shrink at the thoughts of flames and tortures. It is, says he, sufficient that you are able to encounter the temptations which now assault you; when God sends trials, he may send strength.

All fear is in itself painful, and when it conduces not to safety is painful without use. Every consideration therefore, by which groundless terrours may be removed, adds something to human happiness. It is likewise not unworthy of remark, that in proportion as our cares are employed upon the future they are abstracted from the present, from the only time which we can call our own, and of which if we neglect the apparent duties, to make provision against visionary attacks, we shall certainly counteract our own purpose; for he, doubtless, mistakes his true interest, who thinks that he can increase his safety, when he impairs his virtue.

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NUMB. 30. SATURDAY, *June* 30, 1750.

——— *Vultus ubi tuus*
Affulsit populo, gratior it dies,
Et soles melius nitent. HOR.

Whene'er thy countenance divine
Th' attendant people cheers,
The genial suns more radiant shine,
The day more glad appears. ELPHINSTON.

MR. RAMBLER,

THERE are few tasks more ungrateful than for persons of modesty to speak their own praises. In some cases, however, this must be done for the general good, and a generous spirit will on such occasions assert its merit, and vindicate itself with becoming warmth.

My circumstances, Sir, are very hard and peculiar. Could the world be brought to treat me as I deserve, it would be a publick benefit. This makes me apply to you, that my case being fairly stated in a paper so generally esteemed, I may suffer no longer from ignorant and childish prejudices.

My elder brother was a Jew; a very respectable person, but somewhat austere in his manner: highly and deservedly valued by his near relations and intimates, but utterly unfit for mixing in a large society, or gaining a general acquaintance among mankind. In a venerable old age he retired from the world, and I in the bloom of youth came into it,

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succeeding him in all his dignities, and formed, as I might reasonably flatter myself, to be the object of universal love and esteem. Joy and gladness were born with me; cheerfulness, good-humour, and benevolence, always attended and endeared my infancy. That time is long past. So long, that idle imaginations are apt to fancy me wrinkled, old, and disagreeable; but, unless my looking-glass deceives me, I have not yet lost one charm, one beauty of my earliest years. However, thus far is too certain, I am to every body just what they choose to think me, so that to very few I appear in my right shape; and though naturally I am the friend of human kind, to few, very few comparatively, am I useful or agreeable.

This is the more grievous, as it is utterly impossible for me to avoid being in all sorts of places and companies; and I am therefore liable to meet with perpetual affronts and injuries. Though I have as natural an antipathy to cards and dice, as some people have to a cat, many and many an assembly am I forced to endure; and though rest and composure are my peculiar joy, am worn out and harassed to death with journeys by men and women of quality, who never take one but when I can be of the party. Some, on a contrary extreme, will never receive me but in bed, where they spend at least half of the time I have to stay with them; and others are so monstrously ill-bred as to take physick on purpose when they have reason to expect me. Those who keep upon terms of more politeness with me, are generally so cold and constrained in their behaviour,

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that I cannot but perceive myself an unwelcome guest; and even among persons deserving of esteem, and who certainly have a value for me, it is too evident that generally whenever I come I throw a dulness over the whole company, that I am entertained with a formal stiff civility, and that they are glad when I am fairly gone.

How bitter must this kind of reception be to one formed to inspire delight, admiration, and love! To one capable of answering and rewarding the greatest warmth and delicacy of sentiments!

I was bred up among a set of excellent people, who affectionately loved me, and treated me with the utmost honour and respect. It would be tedious to relate the variety of my adventures, and strange vicissitudes of my fortune in many different countries. Here in England there was a time when I lived according to my heart's desire. Whenever I appeared, public assemblies appointed for my reception were crowded with persons of quality and fashion, early drest as for a court, to pay me their devoirs. Cheerful hospitality every where crowned my board, and I was looked upon in every country parish as a kind of social bond between the 'squire, the parson, and the tenants. The laborious poor every where blest my appearance: they do so still, and keep their best clothes to do me honour; though as much as I delight in the honest country folks, they do now and then throw a pot of ale at my head, and sometimes an unlucky boy will drive his cricket-ball full in my face.

Even in these my best days there were persons who thought me too demure and grave. I must

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forsooth by all means be instructed by foreign masters, and taught to dance and play. This method of education was so contrary to my genius, formed for much nobler entertainments, that it did not succeed at all.

I fell next into the hands of a very different set. They were so excessively scandalized at the gaiety of my appearance, as not only to despoil me of the foreign fopperies, the paint and the patches that I had been tricked out with by my last misjudging tutors, but they robbed me of every innocent ornament I had from my infancy been used to gather in the fields and gardens; nay, they blacked my face, and covered me all over with a habit of mourning, and that too very coarse and awkward. I was now obliged to spend my whole life in hearing sermons; nor permitted so much as to smile upon any occasion.

In this melancholy disguise I became a perfect bugbear to all children, and young folks. Whereever I came there was a general hush, and immediate stop to all pleasantness of look or discourse; and not being permitted to talk with them in my own language at that time, they took such a disgust to me in those tedious hours of yawning, that having transmitted it to their children, I cannot now be heard, though it is long since I have recovered my natural form, and pleasing tone of voice. Would they but receive my visits kindly, and listen to what I could tell them—let me say it without vanity—how charming a companion should I be! to every one could I talk on the subjects most interesting and most pleasing. With the great and ambitious, I

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would discourse of honours and advancements, of distinctions to which the whole world should be witness, of unenvied dignities and durable preferments. To the rich I would tell of inexhaustible treasures, and the sure method to attain them. I would teach them to put out their money on the best interest, and instruct the lovers of pleasure how to secure and improve it to the highest degree. The beauty should learn of me how to preserve an everlasting bloom. To the afflicted I would administer comfort, and relaxation to the busy.

As I dare promise myself you will attest the truth of all I have advanced, there is no doubt but many will be desirous of improving their acquaintance with me; and that I may not be thought too difficult, I will tell you, in short, how I wish to be received.

You must know I equally hate lazy idleness and hurry. I would every where be welcomed at a tolerably early hour with decent good-humour and gratitude. I must be attended in the great halls, peculiarly appropriated to me, with respect; but I do not insist upon finery: propriety of appearance, and perfect neatness, is all I require. I must at dinner be treated with a temperate, but cheerful social meal; both the neighbours and the poor should be the better for me. Some time I must have *tête-à-tête* with my kind entertainers, and the rest of my visit should be spent in pleasant walks and airings among sets of agreeable people, in such discourse as I shall naturally dictate, or in reading some few selected out of those numberless books

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that are dedicated to me, and go by my name. A name that, alas! as the world stands at present, makes them oftener thrown aside than taken up. As these conversations and books should be both well chosen, to give some advice on that head may possibly furnish you with a future paper, and any thing you shall offer on my behalf will be of great service to,

Good Mr. RAMBLER,

Your faithful Friend and Servant,

SUNDAY *.

NUMB. 31. TUESDAY, *July* 3, 1750.

Non ego mendosos ausim defendere mores,
Falsaque pro vitiis arma tenere meis. OVID.

Corrupted manners I shall ne'er defend;
Nor, falsely witty, for my faults contend. ELPHINSTON.

THOUGH the fallibility of man's reason, and the narrowness of his knowledge, are very liberally confessed, yet the conduct of those who so willingly admit the weakness of human nature, seems to discover that this acknowledgment is not altogether sincere; at least, that most make it with a tacit reserve in favour of themselves, and that with whatever ease they give up the claim of their neighbours, they are desirous of being thought exempt from

* This paper was written by Miss Catherine Talbot, daughter of the Rev. Ed. Talbot, Archdeacon of Berks, and Preacher at the Rolls. She died Jan. 9, 1770. See Preface to the RAMBLER, in 'BRITISH ESSAYISTS," vol. 19. C.

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faults in their own conduct, and from errour in their opinions.

The certain and obstinate opposition, which we may observe made to confutation however clear, and to reproof however tender, is an undoubted argument, that some dormant privilege is thought to be attacked; for as no man can lose what he neither possesses, nor imagines himself to possess, or be defrauded of that to which he has no right, it is reasonable to suppose that those who break out into fury at the softest contradiction, or the slightest censure, since they apparently conclude themselves injured, must fancy some ancient immunity violated, or some natural prerogative invaded. To be mistaken, if they thought themselves liable to mistake, could not be considered either as shameful or wonderful, and they would not receive with so much emotion intelligence which only informed them of what they knew before, nor struggle with such earnestness against an attack that deprived them of nothing to which they held themselves entitled.

It is related of one of the philosophers, that when an account was brought him of his son's death, he received it only with this reflection, *I knew that my son was mortal.* He that is convinced of an errour, if he had the same knowledge of his own weakness, would, instead of straining for artifices, and brooding malignity, only regard such oversights as the appendages of humanity, and pacify himself with considering that he had always known man to be a fallible being.

If it be true that most of our passions are excited

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by the novelty of objects, there is little reason for doubting, that to be considered as subject to fallacies of ratiocination, or imperfection of knowledge, is to a great part of mankind entirely new; for it is impossible to fall into any company where there is not some regular and established subordination, without finding rage and vehemence produced only by difference of sentiments about things in which neither of the disputants have any other interest, than what proceeds from their mutual unwillingness to give way to any opinion that may bring upon them the disgrace of being wrong.

I have heard of one that, having advanced some erroneous doctrines in philosophy, refused to see the experiments by which they were confuted: and the observation of every day will give new proofs with how much industry subterfuges and evasions are sought to decline the pressure of resistless arguments, how often the state of the question is altered, how often the antagonist is wilfully misrepresented, and in how much perplexity the clearest positions are involved by those whom they happen to oppose.

Of all mortals none seem to have been more infected with this species of vanity, than the race of writers, whose reputation arising solely from their understanding, gives them a very delicate sensibility of any violence attempted on their literary honour. It is not unpleasing to remark with what solicitude men of acknowledged abilities will endeavour to palliate absurdities and reconcile contradictions, only to obviate criticisms to which all human performances must ever be exposed, and from which

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they can never suffer, but when they teach the world, by a vain and ridiculous impatience, to think them of importance.

Dryden, whose warmth of fancy, and haste of composition, very frequently hurried him into inaccuracies, heard himself sometimes exposed to ridicule for having said in one of his tragedies,

I follow fate, which does too fast pursue.

That no man could at once follow and be followed was, it may be thought, too plain to be long disputed; and the truth is, that Dryden was apparently betrayed into the blunder by the double meaning of the word FATE, to which in the former part of the verse he had annexed the idea of FORTUNE, and in the latter that of DEATH; so that the sense only was, *though pursued by* DEATH, *I will not resign myself to despair, but will follow* FORTUNE, *and do and suffer what is appointed.* This, however, was not completely expressed, and Dryden being determined not to give way to his critics, never confessed that he had been surprised by an ambiguity; but finding luckily in Virgil an account of a man moving in a circle, with this expression, *Et se sequiturque fugitque,* "Here," says he, "is the passage in imitation of which I wrote the line that my criticks were pleased to condemn as nonsense; not but I may sometimes write nonsense, though they have not the fortune to find it."

Every one sees the folly of such mean doublings to escape the pursuit of criticism; nor is there a single reader of this poet, who would not have paid

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him greater veneration, had he shewn consciousness enough of his own superiority to set such cavils at defiance, and owned that he sometimes slipped into errours by the tumult of his imagination, and the multitude of his ideas.

It is happy when this temper discovers itself only in little things, which may be right or wrong without any influence on the virtue or happiness of mankind. We may, with very little inquietude, see a man persist in a project which he has found to be impracticable, live in an inconvenient house because it was contrived by himself, or wear a coat of a particular cut, in hopes by perseverance to bring it into fashion. These are indeed follies, but they are only follies, and, however wild or ridiculous, can very little affect others.

But such pride, once indulged, too frequently operates upon more important objects, and inclines men not only to vindicate their errours, but their vices; to persist in practices which their own hearts condemn, only lest they should seem to feel reproaches, or be made wiser by the advice of others; or to search for sophisms tending to the confusion of all principles, and the evacuation of all duties, that they may not appear to act what they are not able to defend.

Let every man, who finds vanity so far predominant, as to betray him to the danger of this last degree of corruption, pause a moment to consider what will be the consequences of the plea which he is about to offer for a practice to which he knows himself not led at first by reason, but impelled by the violence of desire, surprised by the suddenness of

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passion, or seduced by the soft approaches of temptation, and by imperceptible gradations of guilt. Let him consider what he is going to commit, by forcing his understanding to patronise those appetites, which it is its chief business to hinder and reform.

The cause of virtue requires so little art to defend it, and good and evil, when they have been once shewn, are so easily distinguished, that such apologists seldom gain proselytes to their party, nor have their fallacies power to deceive any but those whose desires have clouded their discernment. All that the best faculties thus employed can perform is, to persuade the hearers that the man is hopeless whom they only thought vicious, that corruption has passed from his manners to his principles, that all endeavours for his recovery are without prospect of success, and that nothing remains but to avoid him as infectious, or hunt him down as destructive.

But if it be supposed that he may impose on his audience by partial representations of consequences, intricate deductions of remote causes, or perplexed combinations of ideas, which having various relations appear different as viewed on different sides; that he may sometimes puzzle the weak and well-meaning, and now and then seduce, by the admiration of his abilities, a young mind still fluctuating in unsettled notions, and neither fortified by instruction nor enlightened by experience; yet what must be the event of such a triumph! A man cannot spend all this life in frolick: age, or disease, or solitude, will bring some hours of seri-

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ous consideration, and it will then afford no comfort to think, that he has extended the dominion of vice, that he has loaded himself with the crimes of others, and can never know the extent of his own wickedness, or make reparation for the mischief that he has caused. There is not, perhaps, in all the stores of ideal anguish, a thought more painful, than the consciousness of having propagated corruption by vitiating principles, of having not only drawn others from the paths of virtue, but blocked up the way by which they should return, of having blinded them to every beauty but the paint of pleasure, and deafened them to every call but the alluring voice of the syrens of destruction.

There is yet another danger in this practice: men who cannot deceive others, are very often successful in deceiving themselves; they weave their sophistry till their own reason is entangled, and repeat their positions till they are credited by themselves; by often contending, they grow sincere in the cause; and by long wishing for demonstrative arguments, they at last bring themselves to fancy that they have found them. They are then at the uttermost verge of wickedness, and may die without having that light rekindled in their minds, which their own pride and contumacy have extinguished.

The men who can be charged with fewest failings, either with respect to abilities or virtue, are generally most ready to allow them; for, not to dwell on things of solemn and awful consideration, the humility of confessors, the tears of saints, and the dying terrours of persons eminent for piety and innocence, it is well

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known that Cæsar wrote an account of the errours committed by him in his wars of Gaul, and that Hippocrates, whose name is perhaps in rational estimation greater than Cæsar's, warned posterity against a mistake into which he had fallen. *So much*, says Celsus, *does the open and artless confession of an errour become a man conscious that he has enough remaining to support his character.*

As all errour is meanness, it is incumbent on every man who consults his own dignity, to retract it as soon as he discovers it, without fearing any censure so much as that of his own mind. As justice requires that all injuries should be repaired, it is the duty of him who has seduced others by bad practices or false notions, to endeavour that such as have adopted his errours should know his retraction, and that those who have learned vice by his example, should by his example be taught amendment.

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NUMB. 32. SATURDAY, *July* 7, 1750.

Ὁσσά τε δαιμονίῃσι τύχαις βροτοὶ ἄγλε' ἔχουσιν,
Ὧν ἄν μοῖραν ἔχῃς, πράῳς φέρε, μηδ' ἀγανάκτει·
Ἰᾶσθαι δὲ πρέπει κάθοσον δύνῃ. PYTHAG.

Of all the woes that load the mortal state,
Whate'er thy portion, mildly meet thy fate;
But ease it as thou canst—— ELPHINSTON.

So large a part of human life passes in a state contrary to our natural desires, that one of the principal topicks of moral instruction is the art of bearing calamities. And such is the certainty of evil, that it is the duty of every man to furnish his mind with those principles that may enable him to act under it with decency and propriety.

The sect of ancient philosophers, that boasted to have carried this necessary science to the highest perfection, were the stoicks, or scholars of Zeno, whose wild enthusiastick virtue pretended to an exemption from the sensibilities of unenlightened mortals, and who proclaimed themselves exalted, by the doctrines of their sect, above the reach of those miseries which embitter life to the rest of the world. They therefore removed pain, poverty, loss of friends, exile, and violent death, from the catalogue of evils; and passed, in their haughty style, a kind of irreversible decree, by which they forbad them to be counted any longer among the objects of terrour or anxiety, or to give any disturbance to the tranquillity of a wise man.

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This edict was, I think, not universally observed; for though one of the more resolute, when he was tortured by a violent disease, cried out, that let pain harass him to its utmost power, it should never force him to consider it as other than indifferent and neutral; yet all had not stubbornness to hold out against their senses: for a weaker pupil of Zeno is recorded to have confessed in the anguish of the gout, that *he now found pain to be an evil.*

It may however be questioned, whether these philosophers can be very properly numbered among the teachers of patience; for if pain be not an evil, there seems no instruction requisite how it may be borne; and therefore, when they endeavour to arm their followers with arguments against it, they may be thought to have given up their first position. But such inconsistencies are to be expected from the greatest understandings, when they endeavour to grow eminent by singularity, and employ their strength in establishing opinions opposite to nature.

The controversy about the reality of external evils is now at an end. That life has many miseries, and that those miseries are, sometimes at least, equal to all the powers of fortitude, is now universally confessed; and therefore it is useful to consider not only how we may escape them, but by what means those which either the accidents of affairs, or the infirmities of nature, must bring upon us, may be mitigated and lightened, and how we may make those hours less wretched, which the condition of our present existence will not allow to be very happy.

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The cure for the greatest part of human miseries is not radical, but palliative. Infelicity is involved in corporeal nature, and interwoven with our being; all attempts therefore to decline it wholly are useless and vain: the armies of pain send their arrows against us on every side, the choice is only between those which are more or less sharp, or tinged with poison of greater or less malignity; and the strongest armour which reason can supply, will only blunt their points, but cannot repel them.

The great remedy which heaven has put in our hands is patience, by which, though we cannot lessen the torments of the body, we can in a great measure preserve the peace of the mind, and shall suffer only the natural and genuine force of an evil, without heightening its acrimony, or prolonging its effects.

There is indeed nothing more unsuitable to the nature of man in any calamity than rage and turbulence, which, without examining whether they are not sometimes impious, are at least always offensive, and incline others rather to hate and despise than to pity and assist us. If what we suffer has been brought upon us by ourselves, it is observed by an ancient poet, that patience is eminently our duty, since no one should be angry at feeling that which he has deserved.

Leniter ex merito quicquid patiare ferendum est.
Let pain deserv'd without complaint be borne.

And surely, if we are conscious that we have not contributed to our own sufferings, if punishment falls upon innocence, or disappointment happens to industry and prudence, patience, whether more neces-

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sary or not, is much easier, since our pain is then without aggravation, and we have not the bitterness of remorse to add to the asperity of misfortune.

In those evils which are allotted to us by Providence, such as deformity, privation of any of the senses, or old age, it is always to be remembered, that impatience can have no present effect, but to deprive us of the consolations which our condition admits, by driving away from us those by whose conversation or advice we might be amused or helped; and that with regard to futurity it is yet less to be justified, since, without lessening the pain, it cuts off the hope of that reward which he, by whom it is inflicted, will confer upon them that bear it well.

In all evils which admit a remedy, impatience is to be avoided, because it wastes that time and attention in complaints, that, if properly applied, might remove the cause. Turenne, among the acknowledgments which he used to pay in conversation to the memory of those by whom he had been instructed in the art of war, mentioned one with honour, who taught him not to spend his time in regretting any mistake which he had made, but to set himself immediately and vigorously to repair it.

Patience and submission are very carefully to be distinguished from cowardice and indolence. We are not to repine, but we may lawfully struggle; for the calamities of life, like the necessities of nature, are calls to labour and exercises of diligence. When we feel any pressure of distress, we are not to conclude that we can only obey the will of heaven by languishing under it, any more than when we per-

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ceive the pain of thirst, we are to imagine that water is prohibited. Of misfortune it never can be certainly known whether, as proceeding from the hand of God, it is an act of favour or of punishment: but since all the ordinary dispensations of Providence are to be interpreted according to the general analogy of things, we may conclude that we have a right to remove one inconvenience as well as another; that we are only to take care lest we purchase ease with guilt; and that our Maker's purpose, whether of reward or severity, will be answered by the labours which he lays us under the necessity of performing.

This duty is not more difficult in any state than in diseases intensely painful, which may indeed suffer such exacerbations as seem to strain the powers of life to their utmost stretch, and leave very little of the attention vacant to precept or reproof. In this state the nature of man requires some indulgence, and every extravagance but impiety may be easily forgiven him. Yet, lest we should think ourselves too soon entitled to the mournful privileges of irresistible misery, it is proper to reflect, that the utmost anguish which human wit can contrive, or human malice can inflict, has been borne with constancy; and that if the pains of disease be, as I believe they are, sometimes greater than those of artificial torture, they are therefore in their own nature shorter: the vital frame is quickly broken, or the union between soul and body is for a time suspended by insensibility, and we soon cease to feel our maladies when they once become too violent to be borne. I think there is some reason for questioning whether

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the body and mind are not so proportioned, that the one can bear all that can be inflicted on the other, whether virtue cannot stand its ground as long as life, and whether a soul well principled will not be separated sooner than subdued.

In calamities which operate chiefly on our passions, such as diminution of fortune, loss of friends, or declension of character, the chief danger of impatience is upon the first attack, and many expedients have been contrived, by which the blow may be broken. Of these the most general precept is, not to take pleasure in any thing, of which it is not in our power to secure the possession to ourselves. This counsel, when we consider the enjoyment of any terrestrial advantage, as opposite to a constant and habitual solicitude for future felicity, is undoubtedly just, and delivered by that authority which cannot be disputed, but in any other sense, is it not like advice, not to walk lest we should stumble, or not to see lest our eyes should light upon deformity? It seems to me reasonable to enjoy blessings with confidence, as well as to resign them with submission, and to hope for the continuance of good which we possess without insolence or voluptuousness, as for the restitution of that which we lose without despondency or murmurs.

The chief security against the fruitless anguish of impatience, must arise from frequent reflection on the wisdom and goodness of the GOD of nature, in whose hands are riches and poverty, honour and disgrace, pleasure and pain, and life and death. A settled conviction of the tendency of every thing to

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our good, and of the possibility of turning miseries into happiness, by receiving them rightly, will incline us to *bless the name of the* LORD, *whether he gives or takes away.*

NUMB. 33. TUESDAY, *July* 10, 1750.

Quod caret alternd requie durabile non est. OVID.
Alternate rest and labour long endure.

IN the early ages of the world, as is well known to those who are versed in ancient traditions, when innocence was yet untainted, and simplicity unadulterated, mankind was happy in the enjoyment of continual pleasure, and constant plenty, under the protection of REST; a gentle divinity, who required of her worshippers neither altars nor sacrifices, and whose rites were only performed by prostrations upon turfs of flowers in shades of jasmine and myrtle, or by dances on the banks of rivers flowing with milk and nectar.

Under this easy government the first generations breathed the fragrance of perpetual spring, ate the fruits, which, without culture, fell ripe into their hands, and slept under bowers arched by nature, with the birds singing over their heads, and the beasts sporting about them. But by degrees they began to lose their original integrity; each, though there was more than enough for all, was desirous of appropriating part to himself. Then entered Violence and Fraud, and Theft and Rapine. Soon after Pride and Envy broke into the world, and brought with them a new standard of wealth; for men, who,

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till then thought themselves rich when they wanted nothing, now rated their demands, not by the calls of nature, but by the plenty of others; and began to consider themselves as poor, when they beheld their own possessions exceeded by those of their neighbours. Now only one could be happy, because only one could have most, and that one was always in danger, lest the same arts by which he had supplanted others should be practised upon himself.

Amidst the prevalence of this corruption, the state of the earth was changed; the year was divided into seasons; part of the ground became barren, and the rest yielded only berries, acorns, and herbs. The summer and autumn indeed furnished a coarse and inelegant sufficiency, but winter was without any relief: FAMINE, with a thousand diseases which the inclemency of the air invited into the upper regions, made havock among men, and there appeared to be danger lest they should be destroyed before they were reformed.

To oppose the devastations of FAMINE, who scattered the ground every where with carcases, LABOUR came down upon earth. LABOUR was the son of NECESSITY, the nurseling of HOPE, and the pupil of ART; he had the strength of his mother, the spirit of his nurse, and the dexterity of his governess. His face was wrinkled with the wind, and swarthy with the sun; he had the implements of husbandry in one hand, with which he turned up the earth; in the other he had the tools of architecture, and raised walls and towers at his pleasure. He called out with a rough voice, "Mortals!

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see here the power to whom you are consigned, and from whom you are to hope for all your pleasures, and all your safety. You have long languished under the dominion of REST, an impotent and deceitful goddess, who can neither protect nor relieve you, but resigns you to the first attacks of either FAMINE or DISEASE, and suffers her shades to be invaded by every enemy and destroyed by every accident.

"Awake therefore to the call of LABOUR. I will teach you to remedy the sterility of the earth, and the severity of the sky; I will compel summer to find provisions for the winter; I will force the waters to give you their fish, the air its fowls, and the forest its beasts; I will teach you to pierce the bowels of the earth, and bring out from the caverns of the mountains metals which shall give strength to your hands, and security to your bodies, by which you may be covered from the assaults of the fiercest beasts, and with which you shall fell the oak, and divide rocks, and subject all nature to your use and pleasure."

Encouraged by this magnificent invitation, the inhabitants of the globe considered LABOUR as their only friend, and hasted to his command. He led them out to the fields and mountains, and shewed them how to open mines, to level hills, to drain marshes, and change the course of rivers. The face of things was immediately transformed; the land was covered with towns and villages, encompassed with fields of corn, and plantations of fruit-trees; and nothing was seen but heaps of grain, and baskets of fruit, full tables, and crowded store-houses.

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Thus LABOUR and his followers added every hour new acquisitions to their conquests, and saw FAMINE gradually dispossessed of his dominions; till at last, amidst their jollity and triumphs, they were depressed and amazed by the approach of LASSITUDE, who was known by her sunk eyes and dejected countenance. She came forward trembling and groaning: at every groan the hearts of all those that beheld her lost their courage, their nerves slackened, their hands shook, and the instruments of labour fell from their grasp.

Shocked with this horrid phantom, they reflected with regret on their easy compliance with the solicitations of LABOUR, and began to wish again for the goldens hours which they remembered to have passed under the reign of REST, whom they resolved again to visit, and to whom they intended to dedicate the remaining part of their lives. REST had not left the world; they quickly found her, and to atone for their former desertion, invited her to the enjoyment of those acquisitions which LABOUR had procured them.

REST therefore took leave of the groves and valleys, which she had hitherto inhabited, and entered into palaces, reposed herself in alcoves, and slumbered away the winter upon beds of down, and the summer in artificial grottoes with cascades playing before her. There was indeed always something wanting to complete her felicity, and she could never lull her returning fugitives to that serenity which they knew before their engagements with LABOUR: Nor was her dominion entirely without controul, for she was

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obliged to share it with LUXURY, though she always looked upon her as a false friend, by whom her influence was in reality destroyed, while it seemed to be promoted.

The two soft associates, however, reigned for some time without visible disagreement, till at last LUXURY betrayed her charge, and let in DISEASE to seize upon her worshippers. REST then flew away, and left the place to the usurpers: who employed all their arts to fortify themselves in their possession, and to strengthen the interest of each other.

REST had not always the same enemy: in some places she escaped the incursions of DISEASE; but had her residence invaded by a more slow and subtle intruder, for very frequently, when every thing was composed and quiet, when there was neither pain within, nor danger without, when every flower was in bloom, and every gale freighted with perfumes, SATIETY would enter with a languishing and repining look, and throw herself upon the couch placed and adorned for the accommodation of REST. No sooner was she seated than a general gloom spread itself on every side, the groves immediately lost their verdure, and their inhabitants desisted from their melody, the breeze sunk in sighs, and the flowers contracted their leaves, and shut up their odours. Nothing was seen on every side but multitudes wandering about they knew not whither, in quest they knew not of what; no voice was heard but of complaints that mentioned no pain, and murmurs that could tell of no misfortune.

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REST had now lost her authority. Her followers again began to treat her with contempt; some of them united themselves more closely to LUXURY, who promised by her arts to drive SATIETY away; and others, that were more wise, or had more fortitude, went back again to LABOUR, by whom they were indeed protected from SATIETY, but delivered up in time to LASSITUDE, and forced by her to the bowers of REST.

Thus REST and LABOUR equally perceived their reign of short duration and uncertain tenure, and their empire liable to inroads from those who were alike enemies to both. They each found their subjects unfaithful, and ready to desert them upon every opportunity. LABOUR saw the riches which he had given always carried away as an offering to REST, and REST found her votaries in every exigence flying from her to beg help of LABOUR. They, therefore, at last determined upon an interview, in which they agreed to divide the world between them, and govern it alternately, allotting the dominion of the day to one, and that of the night to the other, and promised to guard the frontiers of each other, so that, whenever hostilities were attempted, SATIETY should be intercepted by LABOUR, and LASSITUDE expelled by REST. Thus the ancient quarrel was appeased, and as hatred is often succeeded by its contrary, REST afterwards became pregnant by LABOUR, and was delivered of HEALTH, a benevolent goddess, who consolidated the union of her parents, and contributed to the

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regular vicissitudes of their reign, by dispensing her gifts to those only who shared their lives in just proportions between REST and LABOUR.

NUMB. 34. SATURDAY, *July* 14, 1750.

—— Non sine vano
Aurarum et silvæ metu.—— HOR.

Alarm'd with ev'ry rising gale,
In ev'ry wood, in ev'ry vale. ELPHINSTON.

I HAVE been censured for having hitherto dedicated so few of my speculations to the ladies; and indeed the moralist, whose instructions are accommodated only to one half of the human species, must be confessed not sufficiently to have extended his views. Yet it is to be considered, that masculine duties afford more room for counsels and observations, as they are less uniform, and connected with things more subject to vicissitude and accident; we therefore find that in philosophical discourses which teach by precept, or historical narratives that instruct by example, the peculiar virtues or faults of women fill but a small part; perhaps generally too small, for so much of our domestick happiness is in their hands, and their influence is so great upon our earliest years, that the universal interest of the world requires them to be well instructed in their province; nor can it be thought proper that the qualities by which so much

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pain or pleasure may be given, should be left to the direction of chance.

I have, therefore, willingly given a place in my paper to a letter, which perhaps may not be wholly useless to them whose chief ambition is to please, as it shews how certainly the end is missed by absurd and injudicious endeavours at distinction.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I AM a young gentleman at my own disposal, with a considerable estate; and having passed through the common forms of education, spent some time in foreign countries, and made myself distinguished since my return in the politest company, I am now arrived at that part of life in which every man is expected to settle, and provide for the continuation of his lineage. I withstood for some time the solicitations and remonstrances of my aunts and uncles, but at last was persuaded to visit Anthea, an heiress, whose land lies contiguous to mine, and whose birth and beauty are without objection. Our friends declared that we were born for each other; all those on both sides who had no interest in hindering our union, contributed to promote it, and were conspiring to hurry us into matrimony, before we had an opportunity of knowing one another. I was, however, too old to be given away without my own consent; and having happened to pick up an opinion, which to many of my relations seemed extremely odd, that a man might be unhappy with a large estate, determined to obtain a nearer knowledge of

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the person with whom I was to pass the remainder of my time. To protract the courtship was by no means difficult, for Anthea had a wonderful facility of evading questions which I seldom repeated, and of barring approaches which I had no great eagerness to press.

Thus the time passed away in visits and civilities without any ardent professions of love, or formal offers of settlements. I often attended her to publick places, in which, as is well known, all behaviour is so much regulated by custom, that very little insight can be gained into the private character, and therefore I was not yet able to inform myself of her humour and inclinations.

At last I ventured to propose to her to make one of a small party, and spend a day in viewing a seat and gardens a few miles distant; and having, upon her compliance, collected the rest of the company, I brought, at the hour, a coach which I had borrowed from an acquaintance, having delayed to buy one myself, till I should have an opportunity of taking the lady's opinion for whose use it was intended. Anthea came down, but as she was going to step into the coach, started back with great appearance of terrour, and told us that she durst not enter, for the shocking colour of the lining had so much the air of the mourning coach in which she followed her aunt's funeral three years before, that she should never have her poor dear aunt out of her head.

I knew that it was not for lovers to argue with their mistresses; I therefore sent back the coach and got another more gay. Into this we all entered,

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the coachman began to drive, and we were amusing ourselves with the expectation of what we should see, when, upon a small inclination of the carriage, Anthea screamed out, that we were overthrown. We were obliged to fix all our attention upon her, which she took care to keep up by renewing her outcries, at every corner where we had occasion to turn; at intervals she entertained us with fretful complaints of the uneasiness of the coach, and obliged me to call several times on the coachman to take care and drive without jolting. The poor fellow endeavoured to please us, and therefore moved very slowly, till Anthea found out that this pace would only keep us longer on the stones, and desired that I would order him to make more speed. He whipped his horses, the coach jolted again, and Anthea very complaisantly told us how much she repented that she made one of our company.

At last we got into the smooth road, and began to think our difficulties at an end, when, on a sudden Anthea saw a brook before us, which she could not venture to pass. We were, therefore, obliged to alight, that we might walk over the bridge; but when we came to it we found it so narrow, that Anthea durst not set her foot upon it, and was content, after long consultation, to call the coach back, and with innumerable precautions, terrours, and lamentations, crossed the brook.

It was necessary after this delay to amend our pace, and directions were accordingly given to the coachman, when Anthea informed us, that it was common for the axle to catch fire with a quick motion, and

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begged of me to look out every minute, lest we should all be consumed. I was forced to obey, and give her from time to time the most solemn declarations that all was safe, and that I hoped we should reach the place without losing our lives either by fire or water.

Thus we passed on, over ways soft and hard, with more or less speed, but always with new vicissitudes of anxiety. If the ground was hard, we were jolted; if soft, we were sinking. If we went fast, we should be overturned; if slowly, we should never reach the place. At length she saw something which she called a cloud, and began to consider that at that time of the year it frequently thundered. This seemed to be the capital terrour, for after that the coach was suffered to move on; and no danger was thought too dreadful to be encountered, provided she could get into a house before the thunder.

Thus our whole conversation passed in dangers, and cares, and fears, and consolations, and stories of ladies dragged in the mire, forced to spend all the night on a heath, drowned in rivers, or burnt with lightning; and no sooner had a hairbreadth escape set us free from one calamity, but we were threatened with another.

At length we reached the house where we intended to regale ourselves, and I proposed to Anthea the choice of a great number of dishes, which the place, being well provided for entertainment, happened to afford. She made some objection to every thing that was offered; one thing she hated at that time of the year, another she could not bear

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since she had been seen it spoiled at lady Feedwell's table, another she was sure they could not dress at this house, and another she could not touch without French sauce. At last she fixed her mind upon salmon, but there was no salmon in the house. It was however procured with great expedition, and when it came to the table she found that her fright had taken away her stomach, which indeed she thought no great loss, for she could never believe that any thing at an inn could be cleanly got.

Dinner was now over, and the company proposed, for I was now past the condition of making overtures, that we should pursue our original design of visiting the gardens. Anthea declared that she could not imagine what pleasure we expected from the sight of a few green trees and a little gravel, and two or three pits of clear water: that for her part she hated walking till the cool of the evening, and thought it very likely to rain; and again wished that she had staid at home. We then reconciled ourselves to our disappointment, and began to talk on common subjects, when Anthea told us, that since we came to see gardens, she would not hinder our satisfaction. We all rose, and walked through the enclosures for some time, with no other trouble than the necessity of watching lest a frog should hop across the way, which Anthea told us would certainly kill her if she should happen to see him.

Frogs, as it fell out, there were none; but when we were within a furlong of the gardens, Anthea saw some sheep, and heard the wether clink his bell, which she was certain was not hung upon

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him for nothing, and therefore no assurances nor intreaties should prevail upon her to go a step further; she was sorry to disappoint the company, but her life was dearer to her than ceremony.

We came back to the inn, and Anthea now discovered that there was no time to be lost in returning, for the night would come upon us, and a thousand misfortunes might happen in the dark. The horses were immediately harnessed, and Anthea having wondered what could seduce her to stay so long, was eager to set out. But we had now a new scene of terrour, every man we saw was a robber, and we were ordered sometimes to drive hard, lest a traveller whom we saw behind should overtake us; and sometimes to stop, lest we should come up to him who was passing before us. She alarmed many an honest man, by begging him to spare her life as he passed by the coach, and drew me into fifteen quarrels with persons who increased her fright, by kindly stopping to inquire whether they could assist us. At last we came home, and she told her company next day what a pleasant ride she had been taking.

I suppose, Sir, I need not inquire of you what deductions may be made from this narrative, nor what happiness can arise from the society of that woman who mistakes cowardice for elegance, and imagines all delicacy to consist in refusing to be pleased.

I am, &c.

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NUMB. 35. TUESDAY, *July* 17, 1750.

———*Non pronuba Juno,*
Non Hymenæus adest, non illi Gratia lecto. OVID.

Without connubial Juno's aid they wed;
Nor Hymen nor the Graces bless the bed. ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As you have hitherto delayed the performance of the promise, by which you gave us reason to hope for another paper upon matrimony, I imagine you desirous of collecting more materials than your own experience, or observation, can supply; and I shall therefore lay candidly before you an account of my own entrance into the conjugal state.

I was about eight-and-twenty years old, when having tried the diversions of the town till I began to be weary, and being awakened into attention to more serious business, by the failure of an attorney to whom I had implicitly trusted the conduct of my fortune, I resolved to take my estate into my own care, and methodise my whole life according to the strictest rules of economical prudence.

In pursuance of this scheme, I took leave of my acquaintance, who dismissed me with numberless jests upon my new system; having first endeavoured to divert me from a design so little worthy of a man of wit, by ridiculous accounts of the ignorance and rusticity into which many had sunk in their retirement, after having distinguished themselves in taverns

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and playhouses, and given hopes of rising to uncommon eminence among the gay part of mankind.

When I came first into the country, which, by a neglect not uncommon among young heirs, I had never seen since the death of my father, I found every thing in such confusion, that being utterly without practice in business, I had great difficulties to encounter in disentangling the perplexities of my circumstances; they however gave way to diligent application; and I perceived that the advantage of keeping my own accounts would very much overbalance the time which they could require.

I had now visited my tenants, surveyed my land, and repaired the old house, which, for some years, had been running to decay. These proofs of pecuniary wisdom began to recommend me as a sober, judicious, thriving gentleman, to all my graver neighbours of the country, who never failed to celebrate my management in opposition to Thriftless and Latterwit, two smart fellows, who had estates in the same part of the kingdom, which they visited now and then in a frolick, to take up their rents beforehand, debauch a milk-maid, make a feast for the village, and tell stories of their own intrigues, and then rode post back to town to spend their money.

It was doubtful, however, for some time, whether I should be able to hold my resolution; but a short perseverance removed all suspicions. I rose every day in reputation, by the decency of my conversation, and the regularity of my conduct, and was mentioned with great regard at the assizes, as a man very fit to be put in commission for the peace.

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During the confusion of my affairs, and the daily necessity of visiting farms, adjusting contracts, letting leases, and superintending repairs, I found very little vacuity in my life, and therefore had not many thoughts of marriage; but, in a little while, the tumult of business subsided, and the exact method which I had established enabled me to dispatch my accounts with great facility. I had, therefore, now upon my hands, the task of finding means to spend my time, without falling back into the poor amusements which I had hitherto indulged, or changing them for the sports of the field, which I saw pursued with so much eagerness by the gentlemen of the country, that they were indeed the only pleasures in which I could promise myself any partaker.

The inconvenience of this situation naturally disposed me to wish for a companion, and the known value of my estate, with my reputation for frugality and prudence, easily gained me admission into every family; for I soon found that no inquiry was made after any other virtue, nor any testimonial necessary, but of my freedom from incumbrances, and my care of what they termed the *main chance*. I saw, not without indignation, the eagerness with which the daughters, wherever I came, were set out to show; nor could I consider them in a state much different from prostitution, when I found them ordered to play their airs before me, and to exhibit, by some seeming chance, specimens of their musick, their work, or their housewifery. No sooner was I placed at table, than the young lady was called upon to pay me some civility or

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other; nor could I find means of escaping, from either father or mother, some account of their daughter's excellencies, with a declaration that they were now leaving the world, and had no business on this side the grave, but to see their children happily disposed of; that she whom I had been pleased to compliment at table was indeed the chief pleasure of their age, so good, so dutiful, so great a relief to her mamma in the care of the house, and so much her papa's favourite for her cheerfulness and wit, that it would be with the last reluctance that they should part; but to a worthy gentleman in the neighbourhood, whom they might often visit, they would not so far consult their own gratification, as to refuse her; and their tenderness should be shewn in her fortune, whenever a suitable settlement was proposed.

As I knew these overtures not to proceed from any preference of me before another equally rich, I could not but look with pity on young persons condemned to be set to auction, and made cheap by injudicious commendations; for how could they know themselves offered and rejected a hundred times, without some loss of that soft elevation, and maiden dignity, so necessary to the completion of female excellence?

I shall not trouble you with a history of the stratagems practised upon my judgment, or the allurements tried upon my heart, which, if you have, in any part of your life, been acquainted with rural politicks, you will easily conceive. Their arts have no great variety, they think nothing worth their care but money, and supposing its influence the same

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upon all the world, seldom endeavour to deceive by any other means than false computations.

I will not deny that, by hearing myself loudly commended for my discretion, I began to set some value upon my character, and was unwilling to lose my credit by marrying for love. I therefore resolved to know the fortune of the lady whom I should address, before I inquired after her wit, delicacy, or beauty.

This determination led me to Mitissa, the daughter of Chrysophilus, whose person was at least without deformity, and whose manners were free from reproach, as she had been bred up at a distance from all common temptations. To Mitissa therefore I obtained leave from her parents to pay my court, and was referred by her again to her father, whose direction she was resolved to follow. The question then was, only, what should be settled? The old gentleman made an enormous demand, with which I refused to comply. Mitissa was ordered to exert her power; she told me, that if I could refuse her papa, I had no love for her; that she was an unhappy creature, and that I was a perfidious man; then she burst into tears, and fell into fits. All this, as I was no passionate lover, had little effect. She next refused to see me, and because I thought myself obliged to write in terms of distress, they had once hopes of starving me into measures; but finding me inflexible, the father complied with my proposal, and told me he liked me the more for being so good at a bargain.

I was now married to Mitissa, and was to expe-

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rience the happiness of a match made without passion. Mitissa soon discovered that she was equally prudent with myself, and had taken a husband only to be at her own command, and to have a chariot at her own call. She brought with her an old maid recommended by her mother, who taught her all the arts of domestick management, and was, on every occasion, her chief agent and directress. They soon invented one reason or other, to quarrel with all my servants, and either prevailed on me to turn them away, or treated them so ill that they left me of themselves, and always supplied their places with some brought from my wife's relations. Thus they established a family, over which I had no authority, and which was in a perpetual conspiracy against me; for Mitissa considered herself as having a separate interest, and thought nothing her own, but what she laid up without my knowledge. For this reason she brought me false accounts of the expences of the house, joined with my tenants in complaints of hard times, and by means of a steward of her own, took rewards for soliciting abatements of the rent. Her great hope is to outlive me, that she may enjoy what she has thus accumulated, and therefore she is always contriving some improvements of her jointure land, and once tried to procure an injunction to hinder me from felling timber upon it for repairs. Her father and mother assist her in her projects, and are frequently hinting that she is ill used, and reproaching me with the presents that other ladies receive from their husbands.

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Such, Sir, was my situation for seven years, till at last my patience was exhausted, and having one day invited her father to my house, I laid the state of my affairs before him, detected my wife in several of her frauds, turned out her steward, charged a constable with her maid, took my business in my own hands, reduced her to a settled allowance, and now write this account to warn others against marrying those whom they have no reason to esteem.

I am, &c.

NUMB. 36. SATURDAY, *July* 21, 1750.

Ἀμ' ἕποντο νομῆες
Τερπόμενοι σύριγξι δόλον δ' ὅτι προνόησαν. HOMER.

——— Piping on their reeds the shepherds go,
Nor fear an ambush, nor suspect a foe. POPE.

THERE is scarcely any species of poetry that has allured more readers, or excited more writers, than the pastoral. It is generally pleasing, because it entertains the mind with representations of scenes familiar to almost every imagination, and of which all can equally judge whether they are well described. It exhibits a life, to which we have been always accustomed to associate peace, and leisure, and innocence: and therefore we readily set open the heart for the admission of its images, which contribute to drive away cares and perturbations, and suffer ourselves,

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without resistance, to be transported to elysian regions, where we are to meet with nothing but joy, and plenty, and contentment; where every gale whispers pleasure, and every shade promises repose.

It has been maintained by some, who love to talk of what they do not know, that pastoral is the most ancient poetry; and, indeed, since it is probable that poetry is nearly of the same antiquity with rational nature, and since the life of the first men was certainly rural, we may reasonably conjecture, that, as their ideas would necessarily be borrowed from those objects with which they are acquainted, their composures, being filled chiefly with such thoughts on the visible creation as must occur to the first observers, were pastoral hymns, like those which Milton introduces the original pair singing, in the day of innocence, to the praise of their Maker.

For the same reason that pastoral poetry was the first employment of the human imagination, it is generally the first literary amusement of our minds. We have seen fields, and meadows, and groves, from the time that our eyes opened upon life; and are pleased with birds, and brooks, and breezes, much earlier than we engage among the actions and passions of mankind. We are therefore delighted with rural pictures, because we know the original at an age when our curiosity can be very little awakened by descriptions of courts which we never beheld, or representations of passions which we never felt.

The satisfaction received from this kind of writing not only begins early, but lasts long; we do not, as

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we advance into the intellectual world, throw it away among other childish amusements and pastimes, but willingly return to it in any hour of indolence and relaxation. The images of true pastoral have always the power of exciting delight, because the works of nature, from which they are drawn, have always the same order and beauty, and continue to force themselves upon our thoughts, being at once obvious to the most careless regard, and more than adequate to the strongest reason, and severest contemplation. Our inclination to stillness and tranquillity is seldom much lessened by long knowledge of the busy and tumultuary part of the world. In childhood we turn our thoughts to the country, as to the region of pleasure; we recur to it in old age as a port of rest, and perhaps with that secondary and adventitious gladness, which every man feels on reviewing those places, or recollecting those occurrences, that contributed to his youthful enjoyments, and bring him back to the prime of life, when the world was gay with the bloom of novelty, when mirth wantoned at his side, and hope sparkled before him.

The sense of this universal pleasure has invited *numbers without number* to try their skill in pastoral performances, in which they have generally succeeded after the manner of other imitators, transmitting the same images in the same combination from one to another, till he that reads the title of a poem, may guess at the whole series of the composition; nor will a man, after the perusal of thousands of these performances, find his knowledge enlarged with a single view of nature not produced before, or his

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imagination amused with any new application of those views to moral purposes.

The range of pastoral is indeed narrow, for though nature itself, philosophically considered, be inexhaustible, yet its general effects on the eye and on the ear are uniform, and incapable of much variety of description. Poetry cannot dwell upon the minuter distinctions, by which one species differs from another, without departing from that simplicity of grandeur which fills the imagination; nor dissect the latent qualities of things, without losing its general power of gratifying every mind by recalling its conceptions. However, as each age makes some discoveries, and those discoveries are by degrees generally known, as new plants or modes of culture are introduced, and by little and little become common, pastoral might receive, from time to time, small augmentations, and exhibit once in a century a scene somewhat varied.

But pastoral subjects have been often, like others, taken into the hands of those that were not qualified to adorn them, men to whom the face of nature was so little known, that they have drawn it only after their own imagination, and changed or distorted her features, that their portraits might appear something more than servile copies from their predecessors.

Not only the images of rural life, but the occasions on which they can be properly produced, are few and general. The state of a man confined to the employments and pleasures of the country, is so

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little diversified, and exposed to so few of those accidents which produce perplexities, terrours, and surprises, in more complicated transactions, that he can be shewn but seldom in such circumstances as attract curiosity. His ambition is without policy, and his love without intrigue. He has no complaints to make of his rival, but that he is richer than himself; nor any disasters to lament, but a cruel mistress, or a bad harvest.

The conviction of the necessity of some new source of pleasure induced Sannazarius to remove the scene from the fields to the sea, to substitute fishermen for shepherds, and derive his sentiments from the piscatory life; for which he has been censured by succeeding criticks, because the sea is an object of terrour, and by no means proper to amuse the mind, and lay the passions asleep. Against this objection he might be defended by the established maxim, that the poet has a right to select his images, and is no more obliged to shew the sea in a storm, than the land under an inundation; but may display all the pleasures, and conceal the dangers of the water, as he may lay his shepherd under a shady beech, without giving him an ague, or letting a wild beast loose upon him.

There are, however, two defects in the piscatory eclogue, which perhaps cannot be supplied. The sea, though in hot countries it is considered by those who live, like Sannazarius, upon the coast, as a place of pleasure and diversion, has notwithstanding much less variety than the land, and therefore will be sooner exhausted by a descriptive writer. When he

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has once shewn the sun rising or setting upon it, curled its waters with the vernal breeze, rolled the waves in gentle succession to the shore, and enumerated the fish sporting in the shallows, he has nothing remaining but what is common to all other poetry, the complaint of a nymph for a drowned lover, or the indignation of a fisher that his oysters are refused, and Mycon's accepted.

Another obstacle to the general reception of this kind of poetry, is the ignorance of maritime pleasures, in which the greater part of mankind must always live. To all the inland inhabitants of every region, the sea is only known as an immense diffusion of waters, over which men pass from one country to another, and in which life is frequently lost. They have, therefore, no opportunity of tracing in their own thoughts, the descriptions of winding shores and calm bays, nor can look on the poem in which they are mentioned, with other sensations than on a sea chart, or the metrical geography of Dionysius.

This defect Sannazarius was hindered from perceiving, by writing in a learned language to readers generally acquainted with the works of nature; but if he had made his attempt in any vulgar tongue, he would soon have discovered how vainly he had endeavoured to make that loved, which was not understood.

I am afraid it will not be found easy to improve the pastorals of antiquity, by any great additions or diversifications. Our descriptions may indeed differ from those of Virgil, as an English from an Italian summer, and, in some respects, as modern

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from ancient life; but as nature is in both countries nearly the same, and as poetry has to do rather with the passions of men, which are uniform, than their customs, which are changeable, the varieties, which time or place can furnish, will be inconsiderable; and I shall endeavour to shew, in the next paper, how little the latter ages have contributed to the improvement of the rustick muse.

NUMB. 37. TUESDAY, *July* 24, 1750.

Canto quæ solitus, si quando armenta vocabat,
Amphion Dircæus. VIRG.

Such strains I sing as once Amphion play'd
When list'ning flocks the powerful call obey'd.
ELPHINSTON.

IN writing or judging of pastoral poetry, neither the authors nor criticks of latter times seem to have paid sufficient regard to the originals left us by antiquity, but have entangled themselves with unnecessary difficulties, by advancing principles, which, having no foundation in the nature of things, are wholly to be rejected from a species of composition, in which, above all others, mere nature is to be regarded.

It is therefore necessary to inquire after some more distinct and exact idea of this kind of writing. This may, I think, be easily found in the

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pastorals of Virgil, from whose opinion it will not appear very safe to depart, if we consider that every advantage of nature, and of fortune, concurred to complete his productions; that he was born with great accuracy and severity of judgment, enlightened with all the learning of one of the brightest ages, and embellished with the elegance of the Roman court; that he employed his powers rather in improving, than inventing, and therefore must have endeavoured to recompense the want of novelty by exactness; that taking Theocritus for his original, he found pastoral far advanced towards perfection, and that having so great a rival, he must have proceeded with uncommon caution.

If we search the writings of Virgil for the true definition of a pastoral, it will be found *a poem in which any action or passion is represented by its effects upon a country life.* Whatsoever therefore may, according to the common course of things, happen in the country, may afford a subject for a pastoral poet.

In this definition, it will immediately occur to those who are versed in the writings of the modern criticks, that there is no mention of the golden age. I cannot indeed easily discover why it is thought necessary to refer descriptions of a rural state to remote times, nor can I perceive that any writer has consistently preserved the Arcadian manners and sentiments. The only reason, that I have read, on which this rule has been founded, is, that, according to the customs of modern life, it is improbable that shepherds should be capable of harmonious numbers,

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or delicate sentiments; and therefore the reader must exalt his ideas of the pastoral character, by carrying his thoughts back to the age in which the care of herds and flocks was the employment of the wisest and greatest men.

These reasoners seem to have been led into their hypothesis, by considering pastoral, not in general, as a representation of rural nature, and consequently as exhibiting the ideas and sentiments of those, whoever they are, to whom the country affords pleasure or employment, but simply as a dialogue, or narrative of men actually tending sheep, and busied in the lowest and most laborious offices; from whence they very readily concluded, since characters must necessarily be preserved, that either the sentiments must sink to the level of the speakers, or the speakers must be raised to the height of the sentiments.

In consequence of these original errours, a thousand precepts have been given, which have only contributed to perplex and confound. Some have thought it necessary that the imaginary manners of the golden age should be universally preserved, and have therefore believed, that nothing more could be admitted in pastoral, than lilies and roses, and rocks and streams, among which are heard the gentle whispers of chaste fondness, or the soft complaints of amorous impatience. In pastoral, as in other writings, chastity of sentiment ought doubtless to be observed, and purity of manners to be represented; not because the poet is confined to the images of the golden age, but because,

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having the subject in his own choice, he ought always to consult the interest of virtue.

These advocates for the golden age lay down other principles, not very consistent with their general plan; for they tell us, that, to support the character of the shepherd, it is proper that all refinement should be avoided, and that some slight instances of ignorance should be interspersed. Thus the shepherd in Virgil is supposed to have forgot the name of Anaximander, and in Pope the term Zodiack is too hard for a rustick apprehension. But if we place our shepherds in their primitive condition, we may give them learning among their other qualifications; and if we suffer them to allude at all to things of later existence, which, perhaps, cannot with any great propriety be allowed, there can be no danger of making them speak with too much accuracy, since they conversed with divinities, and transmitted to succeeding ages the arts of life.

Other writers, having the mean and despicable condition of a shepherd always before them, conceive it necessary to degrade the language of pastoral by obsolete terms and rustick words, which they very learnedly call Dorick, without reflecting that they thus became authors of a mangled dialect, which no human being ever could have spoken, that they may as well refine the speech as the sentiments of their personages, and that none of the inconsistencies which they endeavour to avoid, is greater than that of joining elegance of thought with coarseness of diction. Spenser begins one of his pastorals with studied barbarity:

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Diggon Davie, I bid her good-day:
Or, Diggon her is, or I missay.
Dig. Her was her while it was day-light,
But now her is a most wretched wight.

What will the reader imagine to be the subject on which speakers like these exercise their eloquence? Will he not be somewhat disappointed, when he finds them met together to condemn the corruptions of the church of Rome? Surely, at the same time that a shepherd learns theology, he may gain some acquaintance with his native language.

Pastoral admits of all ranks of persons, because persons of all ranks inhabit the country. It excludes not, therefore, on account of the characters necessary to be introduced, any elevation or delicacy of sentiment; those ideas only are improper, which, not owing their original to rural objects, are not pastoral. Such is the exclamation in Virgil,

Nunc scio quid sit Amor, duris in cautibus illum
Ismarus, aut Rhodope, aut extremi Garamantes,
Nec generis nostri puerum, nec sanguinis, edunt.

I know thee, Love, in deserts thou wert bred,
And at the dugs of savage tygers fed;
Alien of birth, usurper of the plains. DRYDEN.

which Pope endeavouring to copy, was carried to still greater impropriety:

I know thee, Love, wild as the raging main,
More fierce than tygers on the Libyan plain;
Thou wert from Ætna's burning entrails torn;
Begot in tempests, and in thunders born!

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Sentiments like these, as they have no ground in nature, are indeed of little value in any poem; but in pastoral they are particularly liable to censure, because, it wants that exaltation above common life, which in tragick or heroick writings often reconciles us to bold flights and daring figures.

Pastoral being the *representation of an action or passion, by its effects upon a country life*, has nothing peculiar but its confinement to rural imagery, without which it ceases to be pastoral. This is its true characteristick, and this it cannot lose by any dignity of sentiment, or beauty of diction. The Pollio of Virgil, with all its elevation, is a composition truly bucolick, though rejected by the criticks; for all the images are either taken from the country, or from the religion of the age common to all parts of the empire.

The Silenus is indeed of a more disputable kind, because, though the scene lies in the country, the song being religious and historical, had been no less adapted to any other audience or place. Neither can it well be defended as a fiction; for the introduction of a god seems to imply the golden age, and yet he alludes to many subsequent transactions, and mentions Gallus, the poet's contemporary.

It seems necessary to the perfection of this poem, that the occasion which is supposed to produce it, be at least not inconsistent with a country life, or less likely to interest those who have retired into places of solitude and quiet, than the more busy part of mankind. It is therefore improper to give the title of a pastoral to verses, in which the speakers, after

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the slight mention of their flocks, fall to complaints of errours in the church, and corruptions in the government, or to lamentations of the death of some illustrious person, whom, when once the poet has called a shepherd, he has no longer any labour upon his hands, but can make the clouds weep, and lilies wither, and the sheep hang their heads, without art or learning, genius or study.

It is part of Claudian's character of his rustick, that he computes his time not by the succession of consuls, but of harvest. Those who pass their days in retreats distant from the theatres of business, are always least likely to hurry their imagination with publick affairs.

The facility of treating actions or events in the pastoral style, has incited many writers, from whom more judgment might have been expected, to put the sorrow or the joy which the occasion required into the mouth of Daphne or of Thyrsis; and as one absurdity must naturally be expected to make way for another, they have written with an utter disregard both of life and nature, and filled their productions with mythological allusions, with incredible fictions, and with sentiments which neither passion nor reason could have dictated, since the change which religion has made in the whole system of the world.

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NUMB. 38. SATURDAY, *July* 28, 1750.

Auream quisquis mediocritatem
Diligit, tutus caret obsoleti
Sordibus tecti, caret invidendâ
Sobrius aulâ. HOR.

The man within the golden mean
Who can his boldest wish contain,
Securely views the ruin'd cell,
Where sordid want and sorrow dwell;
And in himself serenely great,
Declines an envied room of state. FRANCIS.

AMONG many parallels which men of imagination have drawn between the natural and moral state of the world, it has been observed that happiness, as well as virtue, consists in mediocrity; that to avoid every extreme is necessary, even to him who has no other care than to pass through the present state with ease and safety; and that the middle path is the road of security, on either side of which are not only the pitfalls of vice, but the precipices of ruin.

Thus the maxim of Cleobulus the Lindian, μέτρον ἄριστον, *Mediocrity is best*, has been long considered as an universal principle, extended through the whole compass of life and nature. The experience of every age seems to have given it new confirmation, and to shew that nothing, however specious or alluring, is pursued with propriety, or enjoyed with safety, beyond certain limits.

Even the gifts of nature, which may truly be considered as the most solid and durable of all ter-

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restrial advantages, are found, when they exceed the middle point, to draw the possessor into many calamities, easily avoided by others that have been less bountifully enriched or adorned. We see every day women perish with infamy, by having been too willing to set their beauty to shew; and others, though not with equal guilt or misery, yet with very sharp remorse, languishing in decay, neglect, and obscurity, for having rated their youthful charms at too high a price. And, indeed, if the opinion of Bacon be thought to deserve much regard, very few sighs would be vented for eminent and superlative elegance of form; "for beautiful women," says he, "are seldom of any great accomplishments, because they, for the most part, study behaviour rather than virtue."

Health and vigour, and a happy constitution of the corporeal frame, are of absolute necessity to the enjoyment of the comforts, and to the performance of the duties of life, and requisite in yet a greater measure to the accomplishment of any thing illustrious or distinguished; yet even these, if we can judge by their apparent consequences, are sometimes not very beneficial to those on whom they are most liberally bestowed. They that frequent the chambers of the sick will generally find the sharpest pains, and most stubborn maladies, among them whom confidence of the force of nature formerly betrayed to negligence and irregularity; and that superfluity of strength, which was at once their boast and their snare, has often, in the latter part of life, no other effect than that it continues them long in impotence and anguish.

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These gifts of nature are, however, always blessings in themselves, and to be acknowledged with gratitude to him that gives them; since they are, in their regular and legitimate effects, productive of happiness, and prove pernicious only by voluntary corruption or idle negligence. And as there is little danger of pursuing them with too much ardour or anxiety, because no skill or diligence can hope to procure them, the uncertainty of their influence upon our lives is mentioned, not to depreciate their real value, but to repress the discontent and envy to which the want of them often gives occasion in those who do not enough suspect their own frailty, nor consider how much less is the calamity of not possessing great powers, than of not using them aright.

Of all those things that make us superior to others, there is none so much within the reach of our endeavours as riches, nor any thing more eagerly or constantly desired. Poverty is an evil always in our view, an evil complicated with so many circumstances of uneasiness and vexation, that every man is studious to avoid it. Some degree of riches is therefore required, that we may be exempt from the gripe of necessity; when this purpose is once attained, we naturally wish for more, that the evil which is regarded with so much horrour, may be yet at a greater distance from us; as he that has once felt or dreaded the paw of a savage, will not be at rest till they are parted by some barrier, which may take away all possibility of a second attack.

To this point, if fear be not unreasonably indulged, Cleobulus would, perhaps, not refuse to extend his

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mediocrity. But it almost always happens, that the man who grows rich, changes his notions of poverty, states his wants by some new measure, and from flying the enemy that pursued him, bends his endeavours to overtake those whom he sees before him. The power of gratifying his appetites increases their demands; a thousand wishes crowd in upon him, importunate to be satisfied, and vanity and ambition open prospects to desire, which still grow wider, as they are more contemplated.

Thus in time want is enlarged without bounds; an eagerness for increase of possessions deluges the soul, and we sink into the gulphs of insatiability, only because we do not sufficiently consider, that all real need is very soon supplied, and all real danger of its invasion easily precluded; that the claims of vanity, being without limits, must be denied at last; and that the pain of repressing them is less pungent before they have been long accustomed to compliance.

Whosoever shall look heedfully upon those who are eminent for their riches, will not think their condition such as that he should hazard his quiet, and much less his virtue, to obtain it. For all that great wealth generally gives above a moderate fortune, is more room for the freaks of caprice, and more privilege for ignorance and vice, a quicker succession of flatteries, and a larger circle of voluptuousness.

There is one reason seldom remarked which makes riches less desirable. Too much wealth is very frequently the occasion of poverty. He whom the wantonness of abundance has once softened, easily sinks into neglect of his affairs; and he that thinks

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he can afford to be negligent, is not far from being poor. He will soon be involved in perplexities, which his inexperience will render unsurmountable; he will fly for help to those whose interest it is that he should be more distressed, and will be at last torn to pieces by the vultures that always hover over fortunes in decay.

When the plains of India were burnt up by a long continuance of drought, Hamet and Raschid, two neighbouring shepherds, faint with thirst, stood at the common boundary of their grounds, with their flocks and herds panting round them, and in extremity of distress prayed for water. On a sudden the air was becalmed, the birds ceased to chirp, and the flocks to bleat. They turned their eyes every way, and saw a being of mighty stature advancing through the valley, whom they knew upon his nearer approach to be the Genius of Distribution. In one hand he held the sheaves of plenty, and in the other the sabre of destruction. The shepherds stood trembling, and would have retired before him; but he called to them with a voice gentle as the breeze that plays in the evening among the spices of Sabæa; "Fly not from your benefactor, children of the dust! I am come to offer you gifts, which only your own folly can make vain. You here pray for water, and water I will bestow; let me know with how much you will be satisfied: speak not rashly; consider, that of whatever can be enjoyed by the body, excess is no less dangerous than scarcity. When you remember the pain of thirst, do not forget the danger of suffocation. Now, Hamet, tell me your request."

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" O Being, kind and beneficent," says Hamet, " let thine eye pardon my confusion. I entreat a little brook, which in summer shall never be dry, and in winter never overflow." " It is granted," replies the Genius; and immediately he opened the ground with his sabre, and a fountain bubbling up under their feet, scattered its rills over the meadows; the flowers renewed their fragrance, the trees spread a greener foliage, and the flocks and herds quenched their thirst.

Then turning to Raschid, the Genius invited him likewise to offer his petition. " I request," says Raschid, " that thou wilt turn the Ganges through my grounds, with all his waters, and all their inhabitants." Hamet was struck with the greatness of his neighbour's sentiments, and secretly repined in his heart, that he had not made the same petition before him; when the Genius spoke, " Rash man, be not insatiable! remember, to thee that is nothing which thou canst not use; and how are thy wants greater than the wants of Hamet?" Raschid repeated his desire, and pleased himself with the mean appearance that Hamet would make in the presence of the proprietor of the Ganges. The Genius then retired towards the river, and the two shepherds stood waiting the event. As Raschid was looking with contempt upon his neighbour, on a sudden was heard the roar of torrents, and they found by the mighty stream that the mounds of the Ganges were broken. The flood rolled forward into the lands of Raschid, his plantations were torn up, his flocks overwhelmed, he was swept away before it, and a crocodile devoured him.

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NUMB. 39. TUESDAY, *July* 31, 1750.

Infelix——nulli bene nupta marito. AUSONIUS.

Unblest, still doom'd to wed with misery.

THE condition of the female sex has been frequently the subject of compassion to medical writers, because their constitution of body is such, that every state of life brings its peculiar diseases: they are placed, according to the proverb, between Scylla and Charybdis, with no other choice than of dangers equally formidable; and whether they embrace marriage, or determine upon a single life, are exposed, in consequence of their choice, to sickness, misery, and death.

It were to be wished that so great a degree of natural infelicity might not be increased by adventitious and artificial miseries; and that beings, whose beauty we cannot behold without admiration, and whose delicacy we cannot contemplate without tenderness, might be suffered to enjoy every alleviation of their sorrows. But, however it has happened, the custom of the world seems to have been formed in a kind of conspiracy against them, though it does not appear but they had themselves an equal share in its establishment; and prescriptions which, by whomsoever they were begun, are now of long continuance, and by consequence of great authority, seem to have almost excluded them from content, in whatsoever condition they shall pass their lives.

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If they refuse the society of men, and continue in that state which is reasonably supposed to place happiness most in their own power, they seldom give those that frequent their conversation any exalted notions of the blessing of liberty; for whether it be that they are angry to see with what inconsiderate eagerness other heedless females rush into slavery, or with what absurd vanity the married ladies boast the change of their condition, and condemn the heroines who endeavour to assert the natural dignity of their sex; whether they are conscious that like barren countries they are free, only because they were never thought to deserve the trouble of a conquest, or imagine that their sincerity is not always unsuspected, when they declare their contempt of men; it is certain, that they generally appear to have some great and incessant cause of uneasiness, and that many of them have at last been persuaded, by powerful rhetoricians, to try the life which they had so long contemned, and put on the bridal ornaments at a time when they least became them.

What are the real causes of the impatience which the ladies discover in a virgin state, I shall perhaps take some other occasion to examine. That it is not to be envied for its happiness, appears from the solicitude with which it is avoided; from the opinion universally prevalent among the sex, that no woman continues long in it but because she is not invited to forsake it; from the disposition always shewn to treat old maids as the refuse of the world; and from the willingness with which it is often quitted at last, by those whose

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experience has enabled them to judge at leisure, and decide with authority.

Yet such is life, that whatever is proposed, it is much easier to find reasons for rejecting than embracing. Marriage, though a certain security from the reproach and solicitude of antiquated virginity, has yet, as it is usually conducted, many disadvantages, that take away much from the pleasure which society promises, and might afford, if pleasures and pains were honestly shared, and mutual confidence inviolably preserved.

The miseries, indeed, which many ladies suffer under conjugal vexations, are to be considered with great pity, because their husbands are often not taken by them as objects of affection, but forced upon them by authority and violence, or by persuasion and importunity, equally resistless when urged by those whom they have been always accustomed to reverence and obey; and it very seldom appears that those who are thus despotick in the disposal of their children, pay any regard to their domestick and personal felicity, or think it so much to be inquired whether they will be happy, as whether they will be rich.

It may be urged, in extenuation of this crime, which parents, not in any other respect to be numbered with robbers and assassins, frequently commit, that, in their estimation, riches and happiness are equivalent terms. They have passed their lives with no other wish than of adding acre to acre, and filling one bag after another, and imagine the advantage of a daughter sufficiently considered, when they have

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secured her a large jointure, and given her reasonable expectations of living in the midst of those pleasures with which she had seen her father and mother solacing their age.

There is an œconomical oracle received among the prudential part of the world, which advises fathers *to marry their daughters, lest they should marry themselves;* by which I suppose it is implied, that women left to their own conduct generally unite themselves with such partners as can contribute very little to their felicity. Who was the author of this maxim, or with what intention it was originally uttered, I have not yet discovered; but imagine that however solemnly it may be transmitted, or however implicitly received, it can confer no authority which nature has denied; it cannot license Titius to be unjust, lest Caia should be imprudent; nor give right to imprison for life, lest liberty should be ill employed.

That the ladies have sometimes incurred imputations which might naturally produce edicts not much in their favour, must be confessed by their warmest advocates; and I have indeed seldom observed that when the tenderness or virtue of their parents has preserved them from forced marriage, and left them at large to chuse their own path in the labyrinth of life, they have made any great advantage of their liberty: They commonly take the opportunity of independence to trifle away youth and lose their bloom in a hurry of diversions, recurring in a succession too quick to leave room for any settled reflection; they see the world with-

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out gaining experience, and at last regulate their choice by motives trifling as those of a girl, or mercenary as those of a miser.

Melanthia came to town upon the death of her father, with a very large fortune, and with the reputation of a much larger; she was therefore followed and caressed by many men of rank, and by some of understanding; but having an insatiable desire of pleasure, she was not at leisure, from the park, the gardens, the theatres, visits, assemblies, and masquerades, to attend seriously to any proposal, but was still impatient for a new flatterer, and neglected marriage as always in her power; till in time her admirers fell away, wearied with expence, disgusted at her folly, or offended by her inconstancy; she heard of concerts to which she was not invited, and was more than once forced to sit still at an assembly for want of a partner. In this distress, chance threw in her way Philotryphus, a man vain, glittering, and thoughtless as herself, who had spent a small fortune in equipage and dress, and was shining in the last suit for which his tailor would give him credit. He had been long endeavouring to retrieve his extravagance by marriage, and therefore soon paid his court to Melanthia, who after some weeks of insensibility saw him at a ball, and was wholly overcome by his performance in a minuet. They married; but a man cannot always dance, and Philotryphus had no other method of pleasing; however, as neither was in any great degree vicious, they live together with no other unhappiness, than vacuity of mind, and that tastelessness of life,

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which proceeds from a satiety of juvenile pleasures, and an utter inability to fill their place by nobler employments. As they have known the fashionable world at the same time, they agree in their notions of all those subjects on which they ever speak, and being able to add nothing to the ideas of each other, are not much inclined to conversation, but very often join in one wish, "That they could sleep more, and think less."

Argyris, after having refused a thousand offers, at last consented to marry Cotylus, the younger brother of a duke, a man without elegance of mien, beauty of person, or force of understanding; who, while he courted her, could not always forbear allusions to her birth, and hints how cheaply she would purchase an alliance to so illustrious a family. His conduct from the hour of his marriage has been insufferably tyrannical, nor has he any other regard to her than what arises from his desire that her appearance may not disgrace him. Upon this principle, however, he always orders that she should be gaily dressed, and splendidly attended; and she has, among all her mortifications, the happiness to take place of her eldest sister.

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NUMB. 40. SATURDAY, *August* 4, 1750.

——— *Nec dicet, cur ego amicum*
Offendam in nugis? Hæ nugæ seria ducent
In mala derisum semel. HOR.

Nor say, for trifles why should I displease
The man I love? For trifles such as these
To serious mischiefs lead the man I love,
If once the flatterer's ridicule he prove. FRANCIS.

IT has been remarked, that authors are *genus irritabile*, a *generation very easily put out of temper*, and that they seldom fail of giving proofs of their irascibility upon the slightest attack of criticism, or the most gentle or modest offer of advice and information.

Writers being best acquainted with one another, have represented this character as prevailing among men of literature, which a more extensive view of the world would have shewn them to be diffused through all human nature, to mingle itself with every species of ambition and desire of praise, and to discover its effects with greater or less restraint, and under disguises more or less artful, in all places and all conditions.

The quarrels of writers, indeed, are more observed, because they necessarily appeal to the decision of the publick. Their enmities are incited by applauses from their parties, and prolonged by treacherous encouragement for general diversion

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and when the contest happens to rise high between men of genius and learning, its memory is continued for the same reason as its vehemence was at first promoted, because it gratifies the malevolence or curiosity of readers, and relieves the vacancies of life with amusement and laughter. The personal disputes, therefore, of rivals in wit are sometimes transmitted to posterity, when the grudges and heart-burnings of men less conspicuous, though carried on with equal bitterness, and productive of greater evils, are exposed to the knowledge of those only whom they nearly affect, and suffered to pass off and be forgotten among common and casual transactions.

The resentment which the discovery of a fault or folly produces, must bear a certain proportion to our pride, and will regularly be more acrimonious as pride is more immediately the principle of action. In whatever therefore we wish to imagine ourselves to excel, we shall always be displeased to have our claims to reputation disputed; and more displeased, if the accomplishment be such as can expect reputation only for its reward. For this reason it is common to find men break out into rage at any insinuations to the disadvantage of their wit, who have borne with great patience reflections on their morals; and of women it has been always known, that no censure wounds so deeply, or rankles so long, as that which charges them with want of beauty.

As men frequently fill their imaginations with trifling pursuits, and please themselves most with things of small importance, I have often known very severe and lasting malevolence excited by un-

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lucky censures, which would have fallen without any effect, had they not happened to wound a part remarkably tender. Gustulus, who valued himself upon the nicety of his palate, disinherited his eldest son for telling him that the wine, which he was then commending, was the same which he had sent away the day before not fit to be drunk. Proculus withdrew his kindness from a nephew, whom he had always considered as the most promising genius of the age, for happening to praise in his presence the graceful horsemanship of Marius. And Fortunio, when he was privy counsellor, procured a clerk to be dismissed from one of the publick offices, in which he was eminent for his skill and assiduity, because he had been heard to say that there was another man in the kingdom on whose skill at billiards he would lay his money against Fortunio's.

Felicia and Floretta had been bred up in one house, and shared all the pleasures and endearments of infancy together. They entered upon life at the same time, and continued their confidence and friendship; consulted each other in every change of their dress, and every admission of a new lover; thought every diversion more entertaining whenever it happened that both were present, and when separated justified the conduct, and celebrated the excellencies, of one another. Such was their intimacy, and such their fidelity; till a birth-night approached, when Floretta took one morning an opportunity, as they were consulting upon new clothes, to advise her friend not to dance at the ball, and informed her that her performance the year before had not an-

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swered the expectation which her other accomplishments had raised. Felicia commended her sincerity, and thanked her for the caution; but told her that she danced to please herself, and was in very little concern what the men might take the liberty of saying, but that if her appearance gave her dear Floretta any uneasiness, she would stay away. Floretta had now nothing left but to make new protestations of sincerity and affection, with which Felicia was so well satisfied, that they parted with more than usual fondness. They still continued to visit, with this only difference, that Felicia was more punctual than before, and often declared how high a value she put upon sincerity, how much she thought that goodness to be esteemed which would venture to admonish a friend of an errour, and with what gratitude advice was to be received, even when it might happen to proceed from mistake.

In a few months Felicia, with great seriousness, told Floretta, that though her beauty was such as gave charms to whatever she did, and her qualifications so extensive, that she could not fail of excellence in any attempt, yet she thought herself obliged by the duties of friendship to inform her, that if ever she betrayed want of judgment, it was by too frequent compliance with solicitations to sing, for that her manner was somewhat ungraceful, and her voice had no great compass. It is true, says Floretta, when I sung three nights ago at lady Sprightly's, I was hoarse with a cold; but I sing for my own satisfaction, and am not in the least pain whether I am liked. However, my

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dear Felicia's kindness is not the less, and I shall always think myself happy in so true a friend.

From this time they never saw each other without mutual professions of esteem, and declarations of confidence, but went soon after into the country to visit their relations. When they came back, they were prevailed on, by the importunity of new acquaintance, to take lodgings in different parts of the town, and had frequent occasion, when they met, to bewail the distance at which they were placed, and the uncertainty which each experienced of finding the other at home.

Thus are the fondest and firmest friendships dissolved, by such openness and sincerity as interrupt our enjoyment of our own approbation, or recal us to the remembrance of those failings which we are more willing to indulge than to correct.

It is by no means necessary to imagine, that he who is offended at advice, was ignorant of the fault, and resents the admonition as a false charge; for perhaps it is most natural to be enraged, when there is the strongest conviction of our own guilt. While we can easily defend our character, we are no more disturbed at an accusation, than we are alarmed by an enemy whom we are sure to conquer; and whose attack, therefore, will bring us honour without danger. But when a man feels the reprehension of a friend seconded by his own heart, he is easily heated into resentment and revenge, either because he hoped that the fault of which he was conscious had escaped the notice of others; or that his friend had looked upon it with tenderness and extenuation, and excused

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it for the sake of his other virtues; or had considered him as too wise to need advice, or too delicate to be shocked with reproach: or, because we cannot feel without pain those reflections roused which we have been endeavouring to lay asleep; and when pain has produced anger, who would not willingly believe, that it ought to be discharged on others, rather than on himself?

The resentment produced by sincerity, whatever be its immediate cause, is so certain, and generally so keen, that very few have magnanimity sufficient for the practice of a duty, which, above most others, exposes its votaries to hardships and persecutions; yet friendship without it is of very little value, since the great use of so close an intimacy is, that our virtues may be guarded and encouraged, and our vices repressed in their first appearance by timely detection and salutary remonstrances.

It is decreed by Providence, that nothing truly valuable shall be obtained in our present state, but with difficulty and danger. He that hopes for that advantage which is to be gained from unrestrained communication, must sometimes hazard, by unpleasing truths, that friendship which he aspires to merit. The chief rule to be observed in the exercise of this dangerous office, is to preserve it pure from all mixture of interest or vanity; to forbear admonition or reproof, when our consciences tell us that they are incited, not by the hopes of reforming faults, but the desire of shewing our discernment, or gratifying our own pride by the mortification of another. It is not indeed certain, that the most refined caution will

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find a proper time for bringing a man to the knowledge of his own failings, or the most zealous benevolence reconcile him to that judgment, by which they are detected; but he who endeavours only the happiness of him whom he reproves, will always have either the satisfaction of obtaining or deserving kindness; if he succeeds, he benefits his friend, and if he fails, he has at least the consciousness that he suffers for only doing well.

NUMB. 41. TUESDAY, *August* 7, 1750.

Nulla recordanti lux est ingrata gravisque,
Nulla fuit cujus non meminisse velit.
Ampliat ætatis spatium sibi vir bonus, hoc est
Vivere bis, vitâ posse priore frui. MART.

No day's remembrance shall the good regret,
Nor wish one bitter moment to forget:
They stretch the limits of this narrow span;
And, by enjoying, live past life again. F. LEWIS.

So few of the hours of life are filled up with objects adequate to the mind of man, and so frequently are we in want of present pleasure or employment, that we are forced to have recourse every moment to the past and future for supplemental satisfactions, and relieve the vacuities of our being, by recollection of former passages, or anticipation of events to come.

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I cannot but consider this necessity of searching on every side for matter on which the attention may be employed, as a strong proof of the superiour and celestial nature of the soul of man. We have no reason to believe that other creatures have higher faculties, or more extensive capacities, than the preservation of themselves, or their species, requires; they seem always to be fully employed, or to be completely at ease without employment, to feel few intellectual miseries or pleasures, and to have no exuberance of understanding to lay out upon curiosity or caprice, but to have their minds exactly adapted to their bodies, with few other ideas than such as corporal pain or pleasure impress upon them.

Of memory, which makes so large a part of the excellence of the human soul, and which has so much influence upon all its other powers, but a small portion has been allotted to the animal world. We do not find the grief with which the dams lament the loss of their young, proportionate to the tenderness with which they caress, the assiduity with which they feed, or the vehemence with which they defend them. Their regard for their offspring, when it is before their eyes, is not, in appearance, less than that of a human parent; but when it is taken away, it is very soon forgotten, and, after a short absence, if brought again, wholly disregarded.

That they have very little remembrance of any thing once out of the reach of their senses, and scarce any power of comparing the present with the past, and regulating their conclusions from experience, may be gathered from this, that their intellects

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are produced in their full perfection. The sparrow that was hatched last spring makes her first nest the ensuing season, of the same materials, and with the same art, as in any following year; and the hen conducts and shelters her first brood of chickens with all the prudence that she ever attains.

It has been asked by men who love to perplex any thing that is plain to common understandings, how reason differs from instinct; and Prior has with no great propriety made Solomon himself declare, that to distinguish them is *the fool's ignorance, and the pedant's pride.* To give an accurate answer to a question, of which the terms are not completely understood, is impossible; we do not know in what either reason or instinct consist, and therefore cannot tell with exactness how they differ; but surely he that contemplates a ship and a bird's nest, will not be long without finding out, that the idea of the one was impressed at once, and continued through all the progressive descents of the species, without variation or improvement; and that the other is the result of experiments, compared with experiments, has grown, by accumulated observation, from less to greater excellence, and exhibits the collective knowledge of different ages and various professions.

Memory is the purveyor of reason, the power which places those images before the mind upon which the judgment is to be exercised, and which treasures up the determinations that are once passed, as the rules of future action, or grounds of subsequent conclusions.

It is, indeed, the faculty of remembrance, which

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may be said to place us in the class of moral agents. If we were to act only in consequence of some immediate impulse, and receive no direction from internal motives of choice, we should be pushed forward by an invincible fatality, without power or reason for the most part to prefer one thing to another, because we could make no comparison but of objects which might both happen to be present.

We owe to memory not only the increase of our knowledge, and our progress in rational inquiries, but many other intellectual pleasures. Indeed, almost all that we can be said to enjoy is past or future; the present is in perpetual motion, leaves us as soon as it arrives, ceases to be present before its presence is well perceived, and is only known to have existed by the effects which it leaves behind. The greatest part of our ideas arises, therefore, from the view before or behind us, and we are happy or miserable, according as we are affected by the survey of our life, or our prospect of future existence.

With regard to futurity, when events are at such a distance from us that we cannot take the whole concatenation into our view, we have generally power enough over our imagination to turn it upon pleasing scenes, and can promise ourselves riches, honours, and delights, without intermingling those vexations and anxieties, with which all human enjoyments are polluted. If fear breaks in on one side, and alarms us with dangers and disappointments, we can call in hope on the other, to solace us with rewards, and escapes, and victories; so that we are seldom without means of palliating remote evils, and can generally

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sooth ourselves to tranquillity, whenever any troublesome presage happens to attack us.

It is, therefore, I believe, much more common for the solitary and thoughtful to amuse themselves with schemes of the future, than reviews of the past. For the future is pliant and ductile, and will be easily moulded by a strong fancy into any form. But the images which memory presents are of a stubborn and untractable nature, the objects of remembrance have already existed, and left their signature behind them impressed upon the mind, so as to defy all attempts of rasure or of change.

As the satisfactions, therefore, arising from memory are less arbitrary, they are more solid, and, are indeed, the only joys which we can call our own. Whatever we have once reposited, as Dryden expresses it, *in the sacred treasure of the past*, is out of the reach of accident, or violence, nor can be lost either by our own weakness, or another's malice:

> ——*Non tamen irritum*
> *Quodcunque retro est efficiet, neque*
> *Diffinget, infectumque reddet,*
> *Quod fugiens semel hora vexit.*

> Be fair or foul, or rain or shine,
> The joys I have possess'd in spite of fate are mine.
> Not Heav'n itself upon the past has pow'r,
> But what has been has been, and I have had my hour.
>
> DRYDEN.

There is certainly no greater happiness than to be able to look back on a life usefully and virtuously employed, to trace our own progress in existence,

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by such tokens to excite neither shame nor sorrow. Life, in which nothing has been done or suffered to distinguish one day from another, is to him that has passed it, as if it had never been, except that he is conscious how ill he has husbanded the great deposit of his Creator. Life, made memorable by crimes, and diversified through its several periods by wickedness, is indeed easily reviewed, but reviewed only with horrour and remorse.

The great consideration which ought to influence us in the use of the present moment, is to arise from the effect, which, as well or ill applied, it must have upon the time to come; for though its actual existence be inconceivably short, yet its effects are unlimited; and there is not the smallest point of time but may extend its consequences, either to our hurt or our advantage, through all eternity, and give us reason to remember it for ever, with anguish or exultation.

The time of life, in which memory seems particularly to claim predominance over the other faculties of the mind, is our declining age. It has been remarked by former writers, that old men are generally narrative, and fall easily into recitals of past transactions, and accounts of persons known to them in their youth. When we approach the verge of the grave it is more eminently true:

Vitæ summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam.

Life's span forbids thee to extend thy cares,
And stretch thy hopes beyond thy years. CREECH.

We have no longer any possibility of great vicissitudes in our favour; the changes which are to hap-

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pen in the world will come too late for our accommodation; and those who have no hope before them, and to whom their present state is painful and irksome, must of necessity turn their thoughts back to try what retrospect will afford. It ought, therefore, to be the care of those who wish to pass the last hours with comfort, to lay up such a treasure of pleasing ideas, as shall support the expences of that time, which is to depend wholly upon the fund already acquired.

——— *Petite hinc, juvenesque senesque*
Finem animo certum, miserisque viatica curis.

Seek here, ye young, the anchor of your mind;
Here, suff'ring age, a bless'd provision find.

ELPHINSTON.

In youth, however unhappy, we solace ourselves with the hope of better fortune, and however vicious, appease our consciences with intentions of repentance; but the time comes at last, in which life has no more to promise, in which happiness can be drawn only from recollection, and virtue will be all that we can recollect with pleasure.

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NUMB. 42. SATURDAY, *August* 11, 1750.

Mihi tarda fluunt ingrataque tempora. HOR.

How heavily my time revolves along. ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

MR. RAMBLER,

I AM no great admirer of grave writings, and therefore very frequently lay your papers aside before I have read them through; yet I cannot but confess that, by slow degrees, you have raised my opinion of your understanding, and that, though I believe it will be long before I can be prevailed upon to regard you with much kindness, you have, however, more of my esteem than those whom I sometimes make happy with opportunities to fill my tea-pot, or pick up my fan. I shall therefore chuse you for the confidant of my distresses, and ask your counsel with regard to the means of conquering or escaping them, though I never expect from you any of that softness and pliancy, which constitutes the perfection of a companion for the ladies: as, in the place where I now am, I have recourse to the mastiff for protection, though I have no intention of making him a lapdog.

My mamma is a very fine lady, who has more numerous and more frequent assemblies at her house than any other person in the same quarter of the town. I was bred from my earliest infancy in a perpetual tumult of pleasure, and remember to have heard of little else than messages, visits,

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playhouses, and balls; of the awkwardness of one woman, and the coquetry of another; the charming convenience of some rising fashion, the difficulty of playing a new game, the incidents of a masquerade, and the dresses of a court-night. I knew before I was ten years old all the rules of paying and receiving visits, and to how much civility every one of my acquaintance was entitled; and was able to return, with the proper degree of reserve or of vivacity, the stated and established answer to every compliment; so that I was very soon celebrated as a wit and a beauty, and had heard before I was thirteen all that is ever said to a young lady. My mother was generous to so uncommon a degree as to be pleased with my advance into life, and allowed me, without envy or reproof, to enjoy the same happiness with herself; though most women about her own age were very angry to see young girls so forward, and many fine gentlemen told her how cruel it was to throw new chains upon mankind, and to tyrannize over them at the same time with her own charms, and those of her daughter.

I have now lived two-and-twenty years, and have passed of each year nine months in town, and three at Richmond; so that my time has been spent uniformly in the same company, and the same amusements, except as fashion has introduced new diversions, or the revolutions of the gay world have afforded new successions of wits and beaux. However, my mother is so good an œconomist of pleasure, that I have no spare hours upon my hands; for every morning brings some new appointment,

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and every night is hurried away by the necessity of making our appearance at different places, and of being with one lady at the opera, and with another at the card-table.

When the time came of settling our scheme of felicity for the summer, it was determined that I should pay a visit to a rich aunt in a remote county. As you know the chief conversation of all tea-tables, in the spring, arises from a communication of the manner in which time is to be passed till winter, it was a great relief to the barrenness of our topicks, to relate the pleasures that were in store for me, to describe my uncle's seat, with the park and gardens, the charming walks and beautiful water-falls; and every one told me how much she envied me, and what satisfaction she had once enjoyed in a situation of the same kind.

As we are all credulous in our own favour, and willing to imagine some latent satisfaction in any thing which we have not experienced, I will confess to you, without restraint, that I had suffered my head to be filled with expectations of some nameless pleasure in a rural life, and that I hoped for the happy hour that should set me free from noise, and flutter, and ceremony, dismiss me to the peaceful shade, and lull me in content and tranquillity. To solace myself under the misery of delay, I sometimes heard a studious lady of my acquaintance read pastorals, I was delighted with scarce any talk but of leaving the town, and never went to bed without dreaming of groves, and meadows, and frisking lambs.

At length I had all my clothes in a trunk, and

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saw the coach at the door; I sprung in with ecstasy, quarrelled with my maid for being too long in taking leave of the other servants, and rejoiced as the ground grew less which lay between me and the completion of my wishes. A few days brought me to a large old house, encompassed on three sides with woody hills, and looking from the front on a gentle river, the sight of which renewed all my expectations of pleasure, and gave me some regret for having lived so long without the enjoyment which these delightful scenes were now to afford me. My aunt came out to receive me, but in a dress so far removed from the present fashion, that I could scarcely look upon her without laughter, which would have been no kind requital for the trouble which she had taken to make herself fine against my arrival. The night and the next morning were driven along with inquiries about our family; my aunt then explained our pedigree, and told me stories of my great grandfather's bravery in the civil wars, nor was it less than three days before I could persuade her to leave me to myself.

At last economy prevailed; she went in the usual manner about her own affairs, and I was at liberty to range in the wilderness, and sit by the cascade. The novelty of the objects about me pleased me for a while, but after a few days they were new no longer, and I soon began to perceive that the country was not my element; that shades, and flowers, and lawns, and waters, had very soon exhausted all their power of pleasing, and that I had not in myself any fund of satisfaction, with which

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I could supply the loss of my customary amusements.

I unhappily told my aunt, in the first warmth of our embraces, that I had leave to stay with her ten weeks. Six only are yet gone, and how shall I live through the remaining four? I go out and return; I pluck a flower, and throw it away; I catch an insect, and when I have examined its colours set it at liberty; I fling a pebble into the water, and see one circle spread after another. When it chances to rain, I walk in the great hall, and watch the minute-hand upon the dial, or play with a litter of kittens, which the cat happens to have brought in a lucky time.

My aunt is afraid I shall grow melancholy, and therefore encourages the neighbouring gentry to visit us. They came at first with great eagerness to see the fine lady from London; but when we met, we had no common topick on which we could converse; they had no curiosity after plays, operas, or musick: and I find as little satisfaction from their accounts of the quarrels or alliances of families, whose names, when once I can escape, I shall never hear. The women have now seen me, know how my gown is made, and are satisfied; the men are generally afraid of me, and say little, because they think themselves not at liberty to talk rudely.

Thus I am condemned to solitude; the day moves slowly forward, and I see the dawn with uneasiness, because I consider that night is at a great distance. I have tried to sleep by a brook, but find its murmurs ineffectual; so that I am forced to be awake at least twelve hours, without visits, without cards,

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without laughter, and without flattery. I walk because I am disgusted with sitting still, and sit down because I am weary with walking. I have no motive to action, nor any object of love, or hate, or fear, or inclination. I cannot dress with spirit, for I have neither rival nor admirer. I cannot dance without a partner; nor be kind or cruel, without a lover.

Such is the life of Euphelia; and such it is likely to continue for a month to come. I have not yet declared against existence, nor called upon the destinies to cut my thread; but I have sincerely resolved not to condemn myself to such another summer, nor too hastily to flatter myself with happiness. Yet I have heard, Mr. Rambler, of those who never thought themselves so much at ease as in solitude, and cannot but suspect it to be some way or other my own fault, that, without great pain, either of mind or body, I am thus weary of myself: that the current of youth stagnates, and that I am languishing in a dead calm, for want of some external impulse. I shall therefore think you a benefactor to our sex, if you will teach me the art of living alone; for I am confident that a thousand and a thousand and a thousand ladies, who affect to talk with ecstasies of the pleasures of the country, are in reality, like me, longing for the winter, and wishing to be delivered from themselves by company and diversion.

I am, Sir, Yours,

EUPHELIA.

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NUMB. 43. TUESDAY, *August* 14, 1750.

Flumine perpetuo torrens solet acrius ire,
Sed tamen hæc brevis est, illa perennis aqua. OVID.

In course impetuous soon the torrent dries,
The brook a constant peaceful stream supplies. F. LEWIS.

IT is observed by those who have written on the constitution of the human body, and the original of those diseases by which it is afflicted, that every man comes into the world morbid, that there is no temperature so exactly regulated but that some humour is fatally predominant, and that we are generally impregnated, in our first entrance upon life, with the seeds of that malady, which, in time, shall bring us to the grave.

This remark has been extended by others to the intellectual faculties. Some that imagine themselves to have looked with more than common penetration into human nature, have endeavoured to persuade us that each man is born with a mind formed peculiarly for certain purposes, and with desires unalterably determined to particular objects, from which the attention cannot be long diverted, and which alone, as they are well or ill pursued, must produce the praise or blame, the happiness or misery of his future life.

This position has not, indeed, been hitherto proved with strength proportionate to the assurance with which it has been advanced, and perhaps will never gain much prevalence by a close examination.

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If the doctrine of innate ideas be itself disputable, there seems to be little hope of establishing an opinion, which supposes that even complications of ideas have been given us at our birth, and that we are made by nature ambitious, or covetous, before we know the meaning of either power or money.

Yet as every step in the progression of existence changes our position with respect to the things about us, so as to lay us open to new assaults and particular dangers, and subjects us to inconveniencies from which any other situation is exempt; as a publick or a private life, youth and age, wealth and poverty, have all some evil closely adherent, which cannot wholly be escaped but by quitting the state to which it is annexed, and submitting to the incumbrances of some other condition; so it cannot be denied that every difference in the structure of the mind has its advantages and its wants; and that failures and defects being inseparable from humanity, however the powers of understanding be extended or contracted, there will on one side or the other always be an avenue to errour and miscarriage.

There seem to be some souls suited to great, and others to little employments; some formed to soar aloft, and take in wide views, and others to grovel on the ground, and confine their regard to a narrow sphere. Of these the one is always in danger of becoming useless by a daring negligence, the other by a scrupulous solicitude; the one collects many ideas, but confused and indistinct; the other is busied in minute accuracy, but without compass and without dignity.

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The general errour of those who possess powerful and elevated understandings, is, that they form schemes of too great extent, and flatter themselves too hastily with success; they feel their own force to be great, and by the complacency with which every man surveys himself, imagine it still greater: they therefore look out for undertakings worthy of their abilities, and engage in them with very little precaution, for they imagine that without premeditated measures, they shall be able to find expedients in all difficulties. They are naturally apt to consider all prudential maxims as below their regard, to treat with contempt those securities and resources which others know themselves obliged to provide, and disdain to accomplish their purposes by established means, and common gradations.

Precipitation thus incited by the pride of intellectual superiority, is very fatal to great designs. The resolution of the combat is seldom equal to the vehemence of the charge. He that meets with an opposition which he did not expect, loses his courage. The violence of his first onset is succeeded by a lasting and unconquerable languor; miscarriage makes him fearful of giving way to new hopes; and the contemplation of an attempt in which he has fallen below his own expectations is painful and vexatious; he therefore naturally turns his attention to more pleasing objects, and habituates his imagination to other entertainments, till, by slow degrees, he quits his first pursuit, and suffers some other project to take possession of his thoughts, in which the same ardour of mind promises him again certain

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success, and which disappointments of the same kind compel him to abandon.

Thus too much vigour in the beginning of an undertaking, often intercepts and prevents the steadiness and perseverance always necessary in the conduct of a complicated scheme, where many interests are to be connected, many movements to be adjusted, and the joint effort of distinct and independent powers to be directed to a single point. In all important events which have been suddenly brought to pass, chance has been the agent rather than reason; and, therefore, however those who seemed to preside in the transaction, may have been celebrated by such as loved or feared them, succeeding times have commonly considered them as fortunate rather than prudent. Every design in which the connection is regularly traced from the first motion to the last, must be formed and executed by calm intrepidity, and requires not only courage which danger cannot turn aside, but constancy which fatigues cannot weary, and contrivance which impediments cannot exhaust.

All the performances of human art, at which we look with praise or wonder, are instances of the resistless force of perseverance: it is by this that the quarry becomes a pyramid, and that distant countries are united with canals. If a man was to compare the effect of a single stroke of the pick-axe, or of one impression of the spade, with the general design and last result, he would be overwhelmed by the sense of their disproportion; yet those petty operations, incessantly continued, in time surmount the greatest difficulties, and mountains are levelled, and oceans bounded, by the slender force of human beings.

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It is therefore of the utmost importance that those who have any intention of deviating from the beaten roads of life, and acquiring a reputation superiour to names hourly swept away by time among the refuse of fame, should add to their reason, and their spirit, the power of persisting in their purposes; acquire the art of sapping what they cannot batter, and the habit of vanquishing obstinate resistance by obstinate attacks.

The student who would build his knowledge on solid foundations, and proceed by just degrees to the pinnacles of truth, is directed by the great philosopher of France to begin by doubting of his own existence. In like manner, whoever would complete any arduous and intricate enterprise, should, as soon as his imagination can cool after the first blaze of hope, place before his own eyes every possible embarrassment that may retard or defeat him. He should first question the probability of success, and then endeavour to remove the objections that he has raised. It is proper, says old Markham *, to exercise your horse on the more inconvenient side of the course, that if he should, in the race, be forced upon it, he may not be discouraged; and Horace advises his poetical friend to consider every day as the last which he shall enjoy, because that will always give pleasure which we receive beyond our hopes. If we alarm ourselves beforehand with more difficulties than we really find, we

* Gervase Markham, in his book entitled "Perfect Horsemanship," 12mo. 1671. He was a dramatic poet, and a voluminous writer on various subjects. C.

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shall be animated by unexpected facility with double spirit; and if we find our cautions and fears justified by the consequence, there will however happen nothing against which provision has not been made, no sudden shock will be received, nor will the main scheme be disconcerted.

There is, indeed, some danger lest he that too scrupulously balances probabilities, and too perspicaciously foresees obstacles, should remain always in a state of inaction, without venturing upon attempts on which he may perhaps spend his labour without advantage. But previous despondence is not the fault of those for whom this essay is designed; they who require to be warned against precipitation, will not suffer more fear to intrude into their contemplations than is necessary to allay the effervescence of an agitated fancy. As Des Cartes has kindly shewn how a man may prove to himself his own existence, if once he can be prevailed upon to question it, so the ardent and adventurous will not be long without finding some plausible extenuation of the greatest difficulties. Such, indeed, is the uncertainty of all human affairs, that security and despair are equal follies; and as it is presumption and arrogance to anticipate triumphs, it is weakness and cowardice to prognosticate miscarriages. The numbers that have been stopped in their career of happiness are sufficient to shew the uncertainty of human foresight; but there are not wanting contrary instances of such success obtained against all appearances, as may warrant the boldest flights of genius, if they are supported by unshaken perseverance.

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NUMB. 44. SATURDAY, *August* 18, 1750.

Ὄναρ ἐκ Διός ἐστι. HOMER.

—— Dreams descend from Jove. POPE.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I HAD lately a very remarkable dream, which made so strong an impression on me, that I remember it every word; and if you are not better employed, you may read the relation of it as follows:

Methought I was in the midst of a very entertaining set of company, and extremely delighted in attending to a lively conversation, when on a sudden I perceived one of the most shocking figures imagination can frame, advancing towards me. She was drest in black, her skin was contracted into a thousand wrinkles her eyes sunk deep in her head, and her complexion pale and livid as the countenance of death. Her looks were filled with terrour and unrelenting severity, and her hands armed with whips and scorpions. As soon as she came near, with a horrid frown, and a voice that chilled my very blood, she bid me follow her. I obeyed, and she led me through rugged paths, beset with briars and thorns, into a deep solitary valley. Wherever she passed, the fading verdure withered beneath her steps; her pestilential breath infected the air with malignant vapours, obscured the lustre of the sun, and involved

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the fair face of heaven in universal gloom. Dismal howlings resounded through the forest, from every baleful tree the night raven uttered his dreadful note, and the prospect was filled with desolation and horrour. In the midst of this tremendous scene my execrable guide addressed me in the following manner:

"Retire with me, O rash unthinking mortal, from the vain allurements of a deceitful world, and learn that pleasure was not designed the portion of human life. Man was born to mourn and to be wretched; this is the condition of all below the stars, and whoever endeavours to oppose it, acts in contradiction to the will of Heaven. Fly then from the fatal enchantments of youth, and social delight, and here consecrate the solitary hours to lamentation and woe. Misery is the duty of all sublunary beings, and every enjoyment is an offence to the Deity, who is to be worshipped only by the mortification of every sense of pleasure, and the everlasting exercise of sighs and tears."

This melancholy picture of life quite sunk my spirits, and seemed to annihilate every principle of joy within me. I threw myself beneath a blasted yew, where the winds blew cold and dismal round my head, and dreadful apprehensions chilled my heart. Here I resolved to lie till the hand of death, which I impatiently invoked, should put an end to the miseries of a life so deplorably wretched. In this sad situation I espied on one hand of me a deep muddy river, whose heavy waves rolled on in slow sullen murmurs. Here I determined to plunge, and

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was just upon the brink, when I found myself suddenly drawn back. I turned about, and was surprised by the sight of the loveliest object I had ever beheld. The most engaging charms of youth and beauty appeared in all her form; effulgent glories sparkled in her eyes, and their awful splendours were softened by the gentlest looks of compassion and peace. At her approach the frightful spectre who had before tormented me, vanished away, and with her all the horrours she had caused. The gloomy clouds brightened into cheerful sunshine, the groves recovered their verdure, and the whole region looked gay and blooming as the garden of Eden. I was quite transported at this unexpected change, and reviving pleasure began to glad my thoughts, when, with a look of inexpressible sweetness, my beauteous deliverer thus uttered her divine instructions:

"My name is RELIGION. I am the offspring of TRUTH and LOVE, and the parent of BENEVOLENCE, HOPE, and JOY. That monster from whose power I have freed you is called SUPERSTITION; she is the child of DISCONTENT, and her followers are FEAR and SORROW. Thus different as we are, she has often the insolence to assume my name and character, and seduces unhappy mortals to think us the same, till she, at length, drives them to the borders of DESPAIR, that dreadful abyss into which you were just going to sink.

"Look round and survey the various beauties of the globe, which Heaven has destined for the seat of the human race, and consider whether a world thus exquisitely framed could be meant

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for the abode of misery and pain. For what end has the lavish hand of Providence diffused such innumerable objects of delight, but that all might rejoice in the privilege of existence, and be filled with gratitude to the beneficent author of it? Thus to enjoy the blessings he has sent, is virtue and obedience; and to reject them merely as means of pleasure, is pitiable ignorance or absurd perverseness. Infinite goodness is the source of created existence; the proper tendency of every rational being, from the highest order of raptured seraphs, to the meanest rank of men, is to rise incessantly from the lower degrees of happiness to higher. They have each faculties assigned them for various orders of delights."

"What," cried I, "is this the language of RELIGION? Does she lead her votaries through flowery paths, and bid them pass an unlaborious life? Where are the painful toils of virtue, the mortifications of penitents, the self-denying exercises of saints and heroes?"

"The true enjoyments of a reasonable being," answered she mildly, "do not consist in unbounded indulgence, or luxurious ease, in the tumult of passions, the languor of indolence, or the flutter of light amusements. Yielding to immoral pleasure corrupts the mind, living to animal and trifling ones debases it; both in their degree disqualify it for its genuine good, and consign it over to wretchedness. Whoever would be really happy, must make the diligent and regular exercise of his superior powers his chief attention, adoring the perfections of his Maker, expressing good-will to his fellow-creatures,

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cultivating inward rectitude. To his lower faculties he must allow such gratifications as will, by refreshing him, invigorate his nobler pursuits. In the regions inhabited by angelic natures, unmingled felicity for ever blooms, joy flows there with a perpetual and abundant stream, nor needs there any mound to check its course. Beings conscious of a frame of mind originally diseased, as all the human race has cause to be, must use the regimen of a stricter self-government. Whoever has been guilty of voluntary excesses must patiently submit both to the painful workings of nature, and needful severities of medicine, in order to his cure. Still he is entitled to a moderate share of whatever alleviating accommodations this fair mansion of his merciful Parent affords, consistent with his recovery. And in proportion as this recovery advances, the liveliest joy will spring from his secret sense of an amended and improving heart.—So far from the horrours of despair is the condition even of the guilty.—Shudder, poor mortal, at the thought of the gulf into which thou wast but now going to plunge.

"While the most faulty have every encouragement to amend, the more innocent soul will be supported with still sweeter consolations under all its experience of human infirmities; supported by the gladdening assurances that every sincere endeavour to outgrow them shall be assisted, accepted, and rewarded. To such a one the lowliest self-abasement is but a deep-laid foundation for the most elevated hopes; since they who faithfully examine and acknowledge what they are, shall

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be enabled under my conduct to become what they desire. The christian and the hero are inseparable; and to aspirings of unassuming trust, and filial confidence, are set no bounds. To him who is animated with a view of obtaining approbation from the Sovereign of the universe, no difficulty is insurmountable. Secure in this pursuit of every needful aid, his conflict with the severest pains and trials, is little more than the vigorous exercises of a mind in health. His patient dependence on that Providence which looks through all eternity, his silent resignation, his ready accommodation of his thoughts and behaviour to its inscrutable ways, is at once the most excellent sort of self-denial, and a source of the most exalted transports. Society is the true sphere of human virtue. In social, active life, difficulties will perpetually be met with; restraints of many kinds will be necessary; and studying to behave right in respect of these is a discipline of the human heart, useful to others, and improving to itself. Suffering is no duty, but where it is necessary to avoid guilt, or to do good; nor pleasure a crime, but where it strengthens the influence of bad inclinations, or lessens the generous activity of virtue. The happiness allotted to man in his present state, is indeed faint and low, compared with his immortal prospects, and noble capacities; but yet whatever portion of it the distributing hand of heaven offers to each individual, is a needful support and refreshment for the present moment, so far as it may not hinder the attaining of his final destination.

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"Return then with me from continual misery to moderate enjoyment and grateful alacrity. Return from the contracted views of solitude to the proper duties of a relative and dependent being. Religion is not confined to cells and closets, nor restrained to sullen retirement. These are the gloomy doctrines of SUPERSTITION, by which she endeavours to break those chains of benevolence and social affection, that link the welfare of every particular with that of the whole. Remember that the greatest honour you can pay to the Author of your being is by such a cheerful behaviour, as discovers a mind satisfied with his dispensations."

Here my preceptress paused, and I was going to express my acknowledgments for her discourse, when a ring of bells from the neighbouring village, and a new-risen sun darting his beams through my windows, awaked me *.

I am, Yours, &c.

* This paper, and No. 100, were written by the late Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, of Deal in Kent, who died Feb. 19, 1806. C.

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NUMB. 45. TUESDAY, *August* 21, 1750.

Ἥπερ μεγίστη γίγνεται σωτηρία,
Ὅταν γύνη πρὸς ἄνδρα μὴ διχοστατῇ,
Νῦν δ' ἐκθρὰ πάντα ——— EURIP.

This is the chief felicity of life,
That concord smile on the connubial bed;
But now 'tis hatred all.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH, in the dissertations which you have given us on marriage, very just cautions are laid down against the common causes of infelicity, and the necessity of having, in that important choice, the first regard to virtue, is carefully inculcated; yet I cannot think the subject so much exhausted, but that a little reflection would present to the mind many questions, in the discussion of which great numbers are interested, and many precepts which deserve to be more particularly and forcibly impressed.

You seem, like most of the writers that have gone before you, to have allowed as an uncontested principle, that *Marriage is generally unhappy:* but I know not whether a man who professes to think for himself, and concludes from his own observations, does not depart from his character when he follows the crowd thus implicitly, and receives maxims without recalling them to a new examina-

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tion, especially when they comprise so wide a circuit of life, and include such a variety of circumstances. As I have an equal right with others to give my opinion of the objects about me, and a better title to determine concerning that state which I have tried, than many who talk of it without experience, I am unwilling to be restrained by mere authority from advancing what, I believe, an accurate view of the world will confirm, that marriage is not commonly unhappy, otherwise than as life is unhappy; and that most of those who complain of conjubial miseries, have as much satisfaction as their nature would have admitted, or their conduct procured, in any other condition.

It is, indeed, common to hear both sexes repine at their change, relate the happiness of their earlier years, blame the folly and rashness of their own choice, and warn those whom they see coming into the world against the same precipitance and infatuation. But it is to be remembered, that the days which they so much wish to call back, are the days not only of celibacy but of youth, the days of novelty and improvement, of ardour and of hope, of health and vigour of body, of gaiety and lightness of heart. It is not easy to surround life with any circumstances in which youth will not be delightful; and I am afraid that whether married or unmarried, we shall find the vesture of terrestrial existence more heavy and cumbrous, the longer it is worn.

That they censure themselves for the indiscretion of their choice, is not a sufficient proof that they have chosen ill, since we see the same discontent at

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evrey other part of life which we cannot change. Converse with almost any man, grown old in a profession, and you will find him regretting that he did not enter into some different course, to which he too late finds his genius better adapted, or in which he discovers that wealth and honour are more easily attained. "The merchant," says Horace, "envies the soldier, and the soldier recounts the felicity of the merchant; the lawyer, when his clients harass him, calls out for the quiet of the countryman; and the countryman, when business calls him to town, proclaims that there is no happiness but amidst opulence and crowds." Every man recounts the inconveniences of his own station, and thinks those of any other less, because he has not felt them. Thus the married praise the ease and freedom of a single state, and the single fly to marriage from the weariness of solitude. From all our observations we may collect with certainty, that misery is the lot of man, but cannot discover in what particular condition it will find most alleviations; or whether all external appendages are not, as we use them, the causes either of good or ill.

Whoever feels great pain, naturally hopes for ease from change of posture; he changes it, and finds himself equally tormented: and of the same kind are the expedients by which we endeavour to obviate or elude those uneasinesses, to which mortality will always be subject. It is not likely that the married state is eminently miserable, since we see such numbers, whom the death of their partners has set free from it, entering it again.

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Wives and husbands are, indeed, incessantly complaining of each other; and there would be reason for imagining that almost every house was infested with perverseness or oppression beyond human sufferance, did we not know upon how small occasions some minds burst out into lamentations and reproaches, and how naturally every animal revenges his pain upon those who happen to be near, without any nice examination of its cause. We are always willing to fancy ourselves within a little of happiness, and when, with repeated efforts, we cannot reach it, persuade ourselves that it is intercepted by an ill-paired mate, since, if we could find any other obstacle, it would be our own fault that it was not removed.

Anatomists have often remarked, that though our diseases are sufficiently numerous and severe, yet when we inquire into the structure of the body, the tenderness of some parts, the minuteness of others, and the immense multiplicity of animal functions that must concur to the healthful and vigorous exercise of all our powers, there appears reason to wonder rather that we are preserved so long, than that we perish so soon, and that our frame subsists for a single day, or hour, without disorder, rather than that it should be broken or obstructed by violence of accidents, or length of time.

The same reflection arises in my mind, upon observation of the manner in which marriage is frequently contracted. When I see the avaricious and crafty, taking companions to their tables and their beds without any inquiry, but after farms and money;

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or the giddy and thoughtless uniting themselves for life to those whom they have only seen by the light of tapers at a ball; when parents make articles for their children, without inquiring after their consent; when some marry for heirs to disappoint their brothers, and others throw themselves into the arms of those whom they do not love, because they have found themselves rejected where they were most solicitous to please; when some marry because their servants cheat them, some because they squander their own money, some because their houses are pestered with company, some because they will live like other people, and some only because they are sick of themselves, I am not so much inclined to wonder that marriage is sometimes unhappy, as that it appears so little loaded with calamity; and cannot but conclude that society has something in itself eminently agreeable to human nature, when I find its pleasures so great, that even the ill choice of a companion can hardly overbalance them.

By the ancient custom of the Muscovites, the men and women never saw each other till they were joined beyond the power of parting. It may be suspected that by this method many unsuitable matches were produced, and many tempers associated that were not qualified to give pleasure to each other. Yet, perhaps, among a people so little delicate, where the paucity of gratifications, and the uniformity of life, gave no opportunity for imagination to interpose its objections, there was not much danger of capricious dislike; and while they felt neither cold

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nor hunger they might live quietly together, without any thought of the defects of one another.

Amongst us, whom knowledge has made nice and affluence wanton, there are, indeed, more cautions requisite to secure tranquillity; and yet if we observe the manner in which those converse, who have singled out each other for marriage, we shall, perhaps, not think that the Russians lost much by their restraint. For the whole endeavour of both parties, during the time of courtship, is to hinder themselves from being known, and to disguise their natural temper, and real desires, in hypocritical imitation, studied compliance, and continual affectation. From the time that their love is avowed, neither sees the other but in a mask, and the cheat is managed often on both sides with so much art, and discovered afterwards with so much abruptness, that each has reason to suspect that some transformation has happened on the wedding night, and that, by a strange imposture, one has been courted, and another married.

I desire you, therefore, Mr. Rambler, to question all who shall hereafter come to you with matrimonial complaints, concerning their behaviour in the time of courtship, and inform them that they are neither to wonder nor repine, when a contract begun with fraud has ended in disappointment.

I am, &c.

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NUMB. 46. SATURDAY, *August* 25, 1750.

——— *Genus, et proavos, et quæ non fecimus ipsi,*
Vix ea nostra voco. OVID.

Nought from my birth or ancestors I claim;
All is my own, my honour and my shame.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

SINCE I find that you have paid so much regard to my complaints as to publish them, I am inclined by vanity, or gratitude, to continue our correspondence; and indeed, without either of these motives, am glad of an opportunity to write, for I am not accustomed to keep in any thing that swells my heart, and have here none with whom I can freely converse. While I am thus employed, some tedious hours will slip away, and when I return to watch the clock, I shall find that I have disburdened myself of part of the day.

You perceive that I do not pretend to write with much consideration of any thing but my own convenience; and, not to conceal from you my real sentiments, the little time which I have spent, against my will, in solitary meditation, has not much contributed to my veneration for authors. I have now sufficient reason to suspect, that, with all your splendid professions of wisdom, and seeming regard for truth, you have very little sincerity; that you either write what you do not think, and willingly impose upon mankind, or that you take no care to think

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right, but while you set up yourselves as guides, mislead your followers by credulity or negligence; that you produce to the publick whatever notions you can speciously maintain, or elegantly express, without enquiring whether they are just, and transcribe hereditary falsehoods from old authors perhaps as ignorant and careless as yourselves.

You may perhaps wonder that I express myself with so much acrimony on a question in which women are supposed to have very little interest; and you are likely enough, for I have seen many instances of the sauciness of scholars, to tell me, that I am more properly employed in playing with my kittens, than in giving myself airs of criticism, and censuring the learned. But you are mistaken, if you imagine that I am to be intimidated by your contempt, or silenced by your reproofs. As I read, I have a right to judge; as I am injured, I have a right to complain; and these privileges, which I have purchased at so dear a rate, I shall not easily be persuaded to resign.

To read has, indeed, never been my business, but as there are hours of leisure in the most active life, I have passed the superfluities of time, which the diversions of the town left upon my hands, in turning over a large collection of tragedies and romances, where, amongst other sentiments common to all authors of this class, I have found almost every page filled with the charms and happiness of a country life; that life to which every statesman in the highest elevation of his prosperity is contriving to retire; that life to which every tragic

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heroine in some scene or other wishes to have been born, and which is represented as a certain refuge from folly, from anxiety, from passion, and from guilt.

It was impossible to read so many passionate exclamations, and soothing descriptions, without feeling some desire to enjoy the state in which all this felicity was to be enjoyed; and therefore I received with raptures the invitation of my good aunt, and expected that by some unknown influence I should find all hopes and fears, jealousies and competitions, vanish from my heart upon my first arrival at the seats of innocence and tranquillity; that I should sleep in halcyon bowers, and wander in elysian gardens, where I should meet with nothing but the softness of benevolence, the candour of simplicity, and the cheerfulness of content; where I should see reason exerting her sovereignty over life, without any interruption from envy, avarice, or ambition, and every day passing in such a manner as the severest wisdom should approve.

This, Mr. Rambler, I tell you I expected, and this I had by an hundred authors been taught to expect. By this expectation I was led hither, and here I live in perpetual uneasiness, without any other comfort than that of hoping to return to London.

Having, since I wrote my former letter, been driven by the mere necessity of escaping from absolute inactivity, to make myself more acquainted with the affairs and inhabitants of this place, I am now no longer an absolute stranger to rural conversation and employments, but am far from discovering in

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them more innocence or wisdom, than in the sentiments or conduct of those with whom I have passed more cheerful and more fashionable hours.

It is common to reproach the tea-table, and the park, with giving opportunities and encouragement to scandal. I cannot wholly clear them from the charge; but must, however, observe in favour of the modish prattlers, that if not by principle, we are at least by accident less guilty of defamation than the country ladies For having greater numbers to observe and censure, we are commonly content to charge them only with their own faults or follies, and seldom give way to malevolence, but such as arises from some injury or affront, real or imaginary, offered to ourselves. But in these distant provinces, where the same families inhabit the same houses from age to age, they transmit and recount the faults of a whole succession. I have been informed how every estate in the neighbourhood was originally got, and find, if I may credit the accounts given me, that there is not a single acre in the hands of the right owner. I have been told of intrigues between beaus and toasts that have been now three centuries in their quiet graves, and am often entertained with traditional scandal on persons of whose names there would have been no remembrance, had they not committed somewhat that might disgrace their descendants.

In one of my visits I happened to commend the air and dignity of a young lady, who had just left the company; upon which two grave matrons looked with great slyness at each other, and the elder asked

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me whether I had ever seen the picture of Henry the Eighth. You may imagine that I did not immediately perceive the propriety of the question: but after having waited a while for information, I was told that the lady's grandmother had a great-great-grandmother that was an attendant on Anna Bullen, and supposed to have been too much a favourite of the king.

If once there happens a quarrel between the principal persons of two families, the malignity is continued without end, and it is common for old maids to fall out about some election, in which their grandfathers were competitors; the heart-burnings of the civil war are not yet extinguished; there are two families in the neighbourhood who have destroyed each other's game from the time of Philip and Mary; and when an account came of an inundation, which had injured the plantations of a worthy gentleman, one of the hearers remarked, with exultation, that he might now have some notion of the ravages committed by his ancestors in their retreat from Bosworth.

Thus malice and hatred descend here with an inheritance, and it is necessary to be well versed in history, that the various factions of this county may be understood. You cannot expect to be on good terms with families who are resolved to love nothing in common; and, in selecting your intimates, you are perhaps to consider which party you most favour in the barons' wars. I have often lost the good opinion of my aunt's visitants by confounding the interests of York and Lancaster, and was once censured for sitting silent when William Rufus was

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called a tyrant. I have, however, now thrown aside all pretences to circumspection, for I find it impossible in less than seven years to learn all the requisite cautions. At London, if you know your company, and their parents, you are safe; but you are here suspected of alluding to the slips of great-grandmothers, and of reviving contests which were decided in armour by the redoubted knights of ancient times. I hope therefore that you will not condemn my impatience, if I am weary of attending where nothing can be learned, and of quarrelling where there is nothing to contest, and that you will contribute to divert me while I stay here by some facetious performance.

I am, Sir,

EUPHELIA.

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NUMB. 47. TUESDAY, *August* 28, 1750.

Quanquam his solatiis acquiescam, debilitor & frangor eadem illa humanitate quæ me, ut hoc ipsum permitterem, induxit. Non ideo tamen velim durior fieri: nec ignoro alios hujusmodi casus nihil amplius vocare quam damnum; eoque sibi magnos homines & sapientes videri. Qui an magni sapientesque sint, nescio: homines non sunt. Hominis est enim affici dolore, sentire: resistere tamen, & solatia admittere; non solatiis non egere. PLIN.

These proceedings have afforded me some comfort in my distress; notwithstanding which, I am still dispirited and unhinged by the same motives of humanity that induced me to grant such indulgences. However, I by no means wish to become less susceptible of tenderness. I know these kind of misfortunes would be estimated by other persons only as common losses, and from such sensations they would conceive themselves great and wise men. I shall not determine either their greatness or their wisdom; but I am certain they have no humanity. It is the part of a man to be affected with grief; to feel sorrow, at the same time that he is to resist it, and to admit of comfort. Earl of ORRERY.

OF the passions with which the mind of man is agitated, it may be observed, that they naturally hasten towards their own extinction, by inciting and quickening the attainment of their objects. Thus fear urges our flight, and desire animates our progress; and if there are some which perhaps may be indulged till they outgrow the good appropriated to their satisfaction, as it is frequently observed of avarice and ambition, yet their immediate tendency is to some means of happiness really existing, and generally within the prospect. The miser always

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imagines that there is a certain sum that will fill his heart to the brim; and every ambitious man, like king Pyrrhus, has an acquisition in his thoughts that is to terminate his labours, after which he shall pass the rest of his life in ease or gaiety, in repose or devotion.

Sorrow is perhaps the only affection of the breast that can be excepted from this general remark, and it therefore deserves the particular attention of those who have assumed the arduous province of preserving the balance of the mental constitution. The other passions are diseases indeed, but they necessarily direct us to their proper cure. A man at once feels the pain and knows the medicine, to which he is carried with greater haste as the evil which requires it is more excruciating, and cures himself by unerring instinct, as the wounded stags of Crete are related by Ælian to have recourse to vulnerary herbs. But for sorrow there is no remedy provided by nature; it is often occasioned by accidents irreparable, and dwells upon objects that have lost or changed their existence; it required what it cannot hope, that the laws of the universe should be repealed; that the dead should return, or the past should be recalled.

Sorrow is not that regret for negligence or errour which may animate us to future care or activity, or that repentance of crimes for which, however irrevocable, our Creator has promised to accept it as an atonement; the pain which arises from these causes has very salutary effects, and is every hour extenuating itself by the reparation of those miscarriages that produce it. Sorrow is properly that state of the mind in which our desires are fixed

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upon the past, without looking forward to the future, an incessant wish that something were otherwise than it has been, a tormenting and harassing want of some enjoyment or possession which we have lost, and which no endeavours can possibly regain. Into such anguish many have sunk upon some sudden diminution of their fortune, an unexpected blast of their reputation, or the loss of children or of friends. They have suffered all sensibility of pleasure to be destroyed by a single blow, have given up for ever the hopes of substituting any other object in the room of that which they lament, resigned their lives to gloom and despondency, and worn themselves out in unavailing misery.

Yet so much is this passion the natural consequence of tenderness and endearment, that, however painful and however useless, it is justly reproachful not to feel it on some occasions; and so widely and constantly has it always prevailed, that the laws of some nations, and the customs of others, have limited a time for the external appearances of grief caused by the dissolution of close alliances, and the breach of domestick union.

It seems determined by the general suffrage of mankind, that sorrow is to a certain point laudable, as the offspring of love, or at least pardonable, as the effect of weakness; but that it ought not to be suffered to increase by indulgence, but must give way, after a stated time, to social duties, and the common avocations of life. It is at first unavoidable, and therefore must be allowed, whether with or without our choice; it may afterwards be ad-

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mitted as a decent and affectionate testimony of kindness and esteem; something will be extorted by nature, and something may be given to the world. But all beyond the bursts of passion, or the forms of solemnity, is not only useless, but culpable; for we have no right to sacrifice, to the vain longings of affection, that time which Providence allows us for the task of our station.

Yet it too often happens that sorrow, thus lawfully entering, gains such a firm possession of the mind, that it is not afterwards to be ejected; the mournful ideas, first violently impressed and afterwards willingly received, so much engross the attention, as to predominate in every thought, to darken gaiety, and perplex ratiocination. An habitual sadness seizes upon the soul, and the faculties are chained to a single object, which can never be contemplated but with hopeless uneasiness.

From this state of dejection it is very difficult to rise to cheerfulness and alacrity; and therefore many who have laid down rules of intellectual health, think preservatives easier than remedies, and teach us not to trust ourselves with favourite enjoyments, not to indulge the luxury of fondness, but to keep our minds always suspended in such indifference, that we may change the objects about us without emotion.

An exact compliance with this rule might, perhaps, contribute to tranquillity, but surely it would never produce happiness. He that regards none so much as to be afraid of losing them, must live for ever without the gentle pleasures of sympathy and confidence; he must feel no melting fondness, no

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warmth of benevolence, nor any of those honest joys which nature annexes to the power of pleasing. And as no man can justly claim more tenderness than he pays, he must forfeit his share in that officious and watchful kindness which love only can dictate, and those lenient endearments by which love only can soften life. He may justly be overlooked and neglected by such as have more warmth in their heart; for who would be the friend of him, whom, with whatever assiduity he may be courted, and with whatever services obliged, his principles will not suffer to make equal returns, and who, when you have exhausted all the instances of good-will, can only be prevailed on not to be an enemy?

An attempt to preserve life in a state of neutrality and indifference, is unreasonable and vain. It by excluding joy we could shut out grief, the scheme would deserve very serious attention; but since, however we may debar ourselves from happiness, misery will find its way at many inlets, and the assaults of pain will force our regard, though we may withhold it from the invitations of pleasure, we may surely endeavour to raise life above the middle point of apathy at one time, since it will necessarily sink below it at another.

But though it cannot be reasonable not to gain happiness for fear of losing it, yet it must be confessed, that in proportion to the pleasure of possession, will be for some time our sorrow for the loss; it is therefore the province of the moralist to enquire whether such pains may not quickly give way to mitigation. Some have thought that the most cer-

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tain way to clear the heart from its embarrassment is to drag it by force into scenes of merriment. Others imagine, that such a transition is too violent, and recommend rather to sooth it into tranquillity, by making it acquainted with miseries more dreadful and afflictive, and diverting to the calamities of others the regards which we are inclined to fix too closely upon our own misfortunes.

It may be doubted whether either of those remedies will be sufficiently powerful. The efficacy of mirth it is not always easy to try, and the indulgence of melancholy may be suspected to be one of those medicines, which will destroy, if it happens not to cure.

The safe and general antidote against sorrow is employment. It is commonly observed, that among soldiers and seamen, though there is much kindness, there is little grief; they see their friend fall without any of that lamentation which is indulged in security and idleness, because they have no leisure to spare from the care of themselves; and whoever shall keep his thoughts equally busy, will find himself equally unaffected with irretrievable losses.

Time is observed generally to wear out sorrow, and its effects might doubtless be accelerated by quickening the succession, and enlarging the variety of objects.

——— *Si tempore l ngo*
Leniri poterit luctus, tu sperne morari,
Qui sapiet sibi tempus erit.—— GROTIUS.

'Tis long ere time can mitigate your grief;
To wisdom fly, she quickly brings relief. F. LEWIS.

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Sorrow is a kind of rust of the soul, which every new idea contributes in its passage to scour away. It is the putrefaction of stagnant life, and is remedied by exercise and motion.

NUMB. 48. SATURDAY, *Sept.* 1, 1750.

Non est vivere, sed valere, vita. MART.

For life is not to live, but to be well. ELPHINSTON.

AMONG the innumerable follies, by which we lay up in our youth repentance and remorse for the succeeding part of our lives, there is scarce any against which warnings are of less efficacy, than the neglect of health. When the springs of motion are yet elastick, when the heart bounds with vigour, and the eye sparkles with spirit, it is with difficulty that we are taught to conceive the imbecility that every hour is bringing upon us, or to imagine that the nerves which are now braced with so much strength, and the limbs which play with so much activity, will lose all their power under the gripe of time, relax with numbness, and totter with debility.

To the arguments which have been used against complaints under the miseries of life, the philosophers have, I think, forgot to add the incredulity of those to whom we recount our sufferings. But if the purpose of lamentation be to excite pity, it

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is surely superfluous for age and weakness to tell their plaintive stories; for pity presupposes sympathy, and a little attention will shew them, that those who do not feel pain, seldom think that it is felt; and a short recollection will inform almost every man, that he is only repaid the insult which he has given, since he may remember how often he has mocked infirmity, laughed at its cautions, and censured its impatience.

The valetudinarian race have made the care of health ridiculous by suffering it to prevail over all other considerations, as the miser has brought frugality into contempt, by permitting the love of money not to share, but to engross his mind: they both err alike, by confounding the means with the end; they grasp at health only to be well, as at money only to be rich; and forget that every terrestrial advantage is chiefly valuable, as it furnishes abilities for the exercise of virtue.

Health is indeed so necessary to all the duties, as well as pleasures of life, that the crime of squandering it is equal to the folly; and he that for a short gratification brings weakness and diseases upon himself, and for the pleasure of a few years passed in the tumults of diversion, and clamours of merriment, condemns the maturer and more experienced part of his life to the chamber and the couch, may be justly reproached, not only as a spendthrift of his own happiness, but as a robber of the publick; as a wretch that has voluntarily disqualified himself for the business of his station, and refused that part which Providence assigns him in the general task of human nature.

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There are perhaps very few conditions more to be pitied than that of an active and elevated mind, labouring under the weight of a distempered body. The time of such a man is always spent in forming schemes, which a change of wind hinders him from executing, his powers fume away in projects and in hope, and the day of action never arrives. He lies down delighted with the thoughts of to-morrow, pleases his ambition with the fame he shall acquire, or his benevolence with the good he shall confer. But in the night the skies are overcast, the temper of the air is changed, he wakes in langour, impatience, and distraction, and has no longer any wish but for ease, nor any attention but to misery. It may be said that disease generally begins that equality which death completes; the distinctions which set one man so much above another are very little perceived in the gloom of a sick chamber, where it will be vain to expect entertainment from the gay, or instruction from the wise; where all human glory is obliterated, the wit is clouded, the reasoner perplexed, and the hero subdued; where the highest and brightest of mortal beings finds nothing left him but the consciousness of innocence.

There is among the fragments of the Greek poets a short hymn to Health, in which her power of exalting the happiness of life, of heightening the gifts of fortune, and adding enjoyment to possession, is inculcated with so much force and beauty, that no one, who has ever languished under the discomforts and infirmities of a lingering disease, can read it without feeling the images dance in his heart,

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and adding from his own experience new vigour to the wish, and from his own imagination new colours to the picture. The particular occasion of this little composition is not known, but it is probable that the author had been sick, and in the first raptures of returning vigour addressed Health in the following manner:

Ὑγίεια πρεσβίστα Μακάρων,
Μετὰ σοῦ ναίοιμι
Τὸ λειπόμενον βιοτᾶς·
Σὺ δέ μοι πρόφρων σύνοικος εἴης.
Εἰ γάρ τις ἢ πλοῦτον χάρις ἢ τεκέων,
Τᾶς εὐδαίμονός τ' ἀνθρώποις
Βασιληίδος ἀρχᾶς, ἢ πόθων,
Ὅνς κρυφίοις Ἀφρόδίτης ἅρκυσιν θηρεύομεν,
Ἤ εἴ τις ἄλλα θεόθεν ἀνθρώποις τέρψις,
Ἢ πόνων ἀμπνοὰ πέφανται·
Μετὰ σεῖο, μάκαιρα Ὑγίεια,
Τέθηλε πάντα, καὶ λάμπει χαρίτων ἔαρ·
Σέθεν δὲ χωρὶς, οὐδεὶς εὐδαίμων τέλει.

Health, most venerable of the powers of heaven! with thee may the remaining part of my life be passed, nor do thou refuse to bless me with thy residence. For whatever there is of beauty or of pleasure in wealth, in descendants, or in sovereign command, the highest summit of human enjoyment, or in those objects of desire which we endeavour to chase into the toils of love; whatever delight, or whatever solace is granted by the celestials, to soften our fatigues, in thy presence, thou parent of happiness, all those joys spread out and flourish; in thy presence blooms the spring of pleasure, and without thee no man is happy.

Such is the power of health, that without its co-operation every other comfort is torpid and life-

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less, as the powers of vegetation without the sun. And yet this bliss is commonly thrown away in thoughtless negligence, or in foolish experiments on our own strength; we let it perish without remembering its value, or waste it to show how much we have to spare; it is sometimes given up to the management of levity and chance, and sometimes sold for the applause of jollity and debauchery.

Health is equally neglected, and with equal impropriety, by the votaries of business and the followers of pleasure. Some men ruin the fabrick of their bodies by incessant revels, and others by intemperate studies; some batter it by excess, and others sap it by inactivity. To the noisy route of bacchanalian rioters, it will be to little purpose that advice is offered, though it requires no great abilities to prove, that he loses pleasure who loses health; their clamours are too loud for the whispers of caution, and they run the course of life with too much precipitance to stop at the call of wisdom. Nor perhaps will they that are busied in adding thousands to thousands, pay much regard to him that shall direct them to hasten more slowly to their wishes. Yet since lovers of money are generally cool, deliberate, and thoughtful, they might surely consider, that the greater good ought not to be sacrificed to the less. Health is certainly more valuable than money, because it is by health that money is procured; but thousands and millions are of small avail to alleviate the protracted tortures of the gout, to repair the broken organs of sense, or resuscitate the powers of digestion.

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Poverty is, indeed, an evil from which we naturally fly; but let us not run from one enemy to another, nor take shelter in the arms of sickness.

——— *Projecere animam! quàm vellent æthere in alto*
Nunc et pauperiem, et duros tolerare labores!

For healthful indigence in vain they pray,
In quest of wealth who throw their lives away.

Those who lose their health in an irregular and impetuous pursuit of literary accomplishments are yet less to be excused; for they ought to know that the body is not forced beyond its strength, but with the loss of more vigour than is proportionate to the effect produced. Whoever takes up life beforehand, by depriving himself of rest and refreshment, must not only pay back the hours, but pay them back with usury: and for the gain of a few months but half enjoyed, must give up years to the listlessness of languor, and the implacability of pain. They whose endeavour is mental excellence, will learn, perhaps too late, how much it is endangered by diseases of the body, and find that knowledge may easily be lost in the starts of melancholy, the flights of impatience, and the peevishness of decrepitude.

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NUMB. 49. TUESDAY, *Sept.* 4, 1705.

Non omnis moriar; multaque pars mei
Vitabit Libitinam, usque ego posterâ
Crescam laude recens. HOR.

Whole Horace shall not die; his songs shall save
The greatest portion from the greedy grave. CREECH.

THE first motives of human actions are those appetites which Providence has given to man in common with the rest of the inhabitants of the earth. Immediately after our birth, thirst and hunger incline us to the breast, which we draw by instinct, like other young creatures, and when we are satisfied, we express our uneasiness by importunate and incessant cries, till we have obtained a place or posture proper for repose.

The next call that rouses us from a state of inactivity, is that of our passions; we quickly begin to be sensible of hope and fear, love and hatred, desire and aversion; these arising from the power of comparison and reflection, extend their range wider, as our reason strengthens, and our knowledge enlarges. At first we have no thought of pain, but when we actually feel it; we afterwards begin to fear it, yet not before it approaches us very nearly; but by degrees we discover it at a greater distance, and find it lurking in remote consequences. Our terrour in time improves into caution, and we

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learn to look round with vigilance and solicitude, to stop all the avenues at which misery can enter, and to perform or endure many things in themselves toilsome and unpleasing, because we know by reason, or by experience, that our labour will be overbalanced by the reward, that it will either procure some positive good, or avert some evil greater than itself.

But as the soul advances to a fuller exercise of its powers, the animal appetites, and the passions immediately arising from them, are not sufficient to find it employment; the wants of nature are soon supplied, the fear of their return is easily precluded, and something more is necessary to relieve the long intervals of inactivity, and to give those faculties, which cannot lie wholly quiescent, some particular direction. For this reason, new desires and artificial passions are by degrees produced; and, from having wishes only in consequence of our wants, we begin to feel wants in consequence of our wishes; we persuade ourselves to set a value upon things which are of no use, but because we have agreed to value them; things which can neither satisfy hunger, nor mitigate pain, nor secure us from any real calamity, and which, therefore, we find of no esteem among those nations whose artless and barbarous manners keep them always anxious for the necessaries of life.

This is the original of avarice, vanity, ambition, and generally of all those desires which arise from the comparison of our condition with that of others. He that thinks himself poor because his neighbour is richer; he that, like Cæsar, would rather be the first man of a village, than the second in the ca-

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pital of the world, has apparently kindled in himself desires which he never received from nature, and acts upon principles established only by the authority of custom.

Of these adscititious passions, some, as avarice and envy, are universally condemned; some, as friendship and curiosity, generally praised; but there are others about which the suffrages of the wise are divided, and of which it is doubted, whether they tend most to promote the happiness, or increase the miseries of mankind.

Of this ambiguous and disputable kind is the love of fame, a desire of filling the minds of others with admiration, and of being celebrated by generations to come with praises which we shall not hear. This ardour has been considered by some as nothing better than splendid madness, as a flame kindled by pride, and fanned by folly; for what, say they, can be more remote from wisdom, than to direct all our actions by the hope of that which is not to exist till we ourselves are in the grave? To pant after that which can never be possessed, and of which the value thus wildly put upon it, arises from this particular condition, that, during life, it is not to be obtained? To gain the favour, and hear the applauses of our contemporaries, is indeed equally desirable with any other prerogative of superiority, because fame may be of use to smooth the paths of life, to terrify opposition, and fortify tranquillity; but to what end shall we be the darlings of mankind, when we can no longer receive any benefits from their favour? It is more reasonable to wish for reputation, while it may yet

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be enjoyed, as Anacreon calls upon his companions to give him for present use the wine and garlands which they purpose to bestow upon his tomb.

The advocates for the love of fame allege in its vindication, that it is a passion natural and universal; a flame lighted by Heaven, and always burning with greatest vigour in the most enlarged and elevated minds. That the desire of being praised by posterity implies a resolution to deserve their praises, and that the folly charged upon it, is only a noble and disinterested generosity, which is not felt, and therefore not understood, by those who have been always accustomed to refer every thing to themselves, and whose selfishness has contracted their understandings. That the soul of man, formed for eternal life, naturally springs forward beyond the limits of corporeal existence, and rejoices to consider herself as co-operating with future ages, and as co-extended with endless duration. That the reproach urged with so much petulance, the reproach of labouring for what cannot be enjoyed, is founded on an opinion which may with great probability be doubted; for since we suppose the powers of the soul to be enlarged by its separation, why should we conclude that its knowledge of sublunary transactions is contracted or extinguished?

Upon an attentive and impartial review of the argument, it will appear that the love of fame is to be regulated rather than extinguished: and that men should be taught not to be wholly careless about their memory, but to endeavour that they may be remembered chiefly for their virtues, since no

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other reputation will be able to transmit any pleasure beyond the grave.

It is evident that fame, considered merely as the immortality of a name, is not less likely to be the reward of bad actions than of good; he therefore has no certain principle for the regulation of his conduct, whose single aim is not to be forgotten. And history will inform us, that this blind and undistinguishing appetite of renown has always been uncertain in its effects, and directed by accident or opportunity, indifferently to the benefit or devastation of the world. When Themistocles complained that the trophies of Miltiades hindered him from sleep, he was animated by them to perform the same services in the same cause. But Cæsar, when he wept at the sight of Alexander's picture, having no honest opportunities of action, let his ambition break out to the ruin of his country.

If, therefore, the love of fame is so far indulged by the mind as to become independent and predominant, it is dangerous and irregular; but it may be usefully employed as an inferiour and secondary motive, and will serve sometimes to revive our activity, when we begin to languish and lose sight of that more certain, more valuable, and more durable reward, which ought always to be our first hope and our last. But it must be strongly impressed upon our minds that virtue is not to be pursued as one of the means to fame, but fame to be accepted as the only recompence which mortals can bestow on virtue; to be accepted with complacence, but not sought with eagerness. Simply to be remembered is no

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advantage; it is a privilege which satire as well as panegyrick can confer, and is not more enjoyed by Titus or Constantine, than by Timocreon of Rhodes, of whom we only know from his epitaph, *that he had eaten many a meal, drunk many a flaggon, and uttered many a reproach.*

Πολλὰ φαγὼν, καὶ πολλὰ πιὼν, καὶ πολλὰ κακ' εἰπὼν
Ἄνθρωπους, κεῖμαι Τιμοκρέων Ῥόδιος.

The true satisfaction which is to be drawn from the consciousness that we shall share the attention of future times, must arise from the hope, that with our name, our virtues will be propagated; and that those whom we cannot benefit in our lives, may receive instruction from our examples, and incitement from our renown.

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NUMB. 50. SATURDAY, *Sept.* 8, 1750.

Credebant hoc grande nefas, et morte piandum,
Si juvenis vetulo non assurrexerat, atque
Barbato cuicunque puer, licet ipse videret
Plura domi fraga, et majores glandis acervos. JUV.

And had not men the hoary head rever'd,
And boys paid rev'rence when a man appear'd,
Both must have died, though richer skins they wore,
And saw more heaps of acorns in their store. CREECH.

I HAVE always thought it the business of those who turn their speculations upon the living world, to commend the virtues, as well as to expose the faults of their contemporaries, and to confute a false as well as to support a just accusation; not only because it is peculiarly the business of a monitor to keep his own reputation untainted, lest those who can once charge him with partiality, should indulge themselves afterwards in disbelieving him at pleasure; but because he may find real crimes sufficient to give full employment to caution or repentance, without distracting the mind by needless scruples and vain solicitudes.

There are certain fixed and stated reproaches that one part of mankind has in all ages thrown upon another, which are regularly transmitted through continued successions, and which he that has once suffered them is certain to use with the same undis-

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tinguishing vehemence, when he has changed his station, and gained the prescriptive right of inflicting on others what he had formerly endured himself.

To these hereditary imputations, of which no man sees the justice, till it becomes his interest to see it, very little regard is to be shewn; since it does not appear that they are produced by ratiocination or inquiry, but received implicitly, or caught by a kind of instantaneous contagion, and supported rather by willingness to credit, than ability to prove, them.

It has been always the practice of those who are desirous to believe themselves made venerable by length of time, to censure the new comers into life, for want of respect to grey hairs and sage experience, for heady confidence in their own understandings, for hasty conclusions upon partial views, for disregard of counsels, which their fathers and grandsires are ready to afford them, and a rebellious impatience of that subordination to which youth is condemned by nature, as necessary to its security from evils into which it would be otherwise precipitated, by the rashness of passion, and the blindness of ignorance.

Every old man complains of the growing depravity of the world, of the petulance and insolence of the rising generation. He recounts the decency and regularity of former times, and celebrates the discipline and sobriety of the age in which his youth was passed; a happy age, which is now no more to be expected, since confusion has broken in upon the world and thrown down all the boundaries of civility and reverence.

It is not sufficiently considered how much he

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assumes who dares to claim the privilege of complaining; for as every man has, in his own opinion, a full share of the miseries of life, he is inclined to consider all clamorous uneasiness, as a proof of impatience rather than of affliction, and to ask, What merit has this man to shew, by which he has acquired a right to repine at the distributions of nature? Or, why does he imagine that exemptions should be granted him from the general condition of man? We find ourselves excited rather to captiousness than pity, and instead of being in haste to soothe his complaints by sympathy and tenderness, we enquire, whether the pain be proportionate to the lamentation; and whether, supposing the affliction real, it is not the effect of vice and folly, rather than calamity.

The querulousness and indignation which is observed so often to disfigure the last scene of life, naturally leads us to enquiries like these. For surely it will be thought at the first view of things, that if age be thus contemned and ridiculed, insulted and neglected, the crime must at least be equal on either part. They who have had opportunities of establishing their authority over minds ductile and unresisting, they who have been the protectors of helplessness, and the instructors of ignorance, and who yet retain in their own hands the power of wealth, and the dignity of command, must defeat their influence by their own misconduct, and make use of all these advantages with very little skill, if they cannot secure to themselves an appearance of respect, and ward off open mockery, and declared contempt.

The general story of mankind will evince, that

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lawful and settled authority is very seldom resisted when it is well employed. Gross corruption, or evident imbecility, is necessary to the suppression of that reverence with which the majority of mankind look upon their governors, and on those whom they see surrounded by splendour, and fortified by power. For though men are drawn by their passions into forgetfulness of invisible rewards and punishments, yet they are easily kept obedient to those who have temporal dominion in their hands, till their veneration is dissipated by such wickedness and folly as can neither be defended nor concealed.

It may, therefore, very reasonably be suspected that the old draw upon themselves the greatest part of those insults which they so much lament, and that age is rarely despised but when it is contemptible. If men imagine that excess of debauchery can be made reverend by time, that knowledge is the consequence of long life, however idly or thoughtlessly employed, that priority of birth will supply the want of steadiness or honesty, can it raise much wonder that their hopes are disappointed, and that they see their posterity rather willing to trust their own eyes in their progress into life, than enlist themselves under guides who have lost their way?

There are, indeed, many truths which time necessarily and certainly teaches, and which might, by those who have learned them from experience, be communicated to their successors at a cheaper rate: but dictates, though liberally enough bestowed, are generally without effect, the teacher gains

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few proselytes by instruction which his own behaviour contradicts; and young men miss the benefit of counsel, because they are not very ready to believe that those who fall below them in practice, can much excel them in theory. Thus the progress of knowledge is retarded, the world is kept long in the same state, and every new race is to gain the prudence of their predecessors by committing and redressing the same miscarriages.

To secure to the old that influence which they are willing to claim, and which might so much contribute to the improvement of the arts of life, it is absolutely necessary that they give themselves up to the duties of declining years; and contentedly resign to youth its levity, its pleasures, its frolicks, and its fopperies. It is a hopeless endeavour to unite the contrarieties of spring and winter; it is unjust to claim the privileges of age, and retain the playthings of childhood. The young always form magnificent ideas of the wisdom and gravity of men, whom they consider as placed at a distance from them in the ranks of existence, and naturally look on those whom they find trifling with long beards, with contempt and indignation, like that which women feel at the effeminacy of men. If dotards will contend with boys in those performances in which boys must always excel them; if they will dress crippled limbs in embroidery, endeavour at gaiety with faultering voices, and darken assemblies of pleasure with the ghastliness of disease, they may well expect those who find their diversions obstructed will hoot them away; and

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that if they descend to competition with youth, they must bear the insolence of successful rivals.

Lusisti satis, edisti satis atque bibisti:
Tempus abire tibi est.

You 've had your share of mirth, of meat and drink;
'Tis time to quit the scene—'tis time to think.

ELPHINSTON.

Another vice of age, by which the rising generation may be alienated from it, is severity and censoriousness, that gives no allowance to the failings of early life, that expects artfulness from childhood, and constancy from youth, that is peremptory in every command, and inexorable to every failure. There are many who live merely to hinder happiness, and whose descendants can only tell of long life, that it produces suspicion, malignity, peevishness, and persecution: and yet even these tyrants can talk of the ingratitude of the age, curse their heirs for impatience, and wonder that young men cannot take pleasure in their father's company.

He that would pass the latter part of life with honour and decency, must, when he is young, consider that he shall one day be old; and remember, when he is old, that he has once been young. In youth, he must lay up knowledge for his support, when his powers of acting shall forsake him; and in age forbear to animadvert with rigour on faults which experience only can correct.

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NUMB. 51. TUESDAY, *Sept.* 11, 1750.

——— *Stultus labor est ineptiarum.* MART.

How foolish is the toil of trifling cares! ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As you have allowed a place in your paper to Euphelia's letters from the country, and appear to think no form of human life unworthy of your attention, I have resolved, after many struggles with idleness and diffidence, to give you some account of my entertainment in this sober season of universal retreat, and to describe to you the employments of those who look with contempt on the pleasures and diversions of polite life, and employ all their powers of censure and invective upon the uselessness, vanity, and folly, of dress, visits, and conversation.

When a tiresome and vexatious journey of four days had brought me to the house, where invitation, regularly sent for seven years together, had at last induced me to pass the summer, I was surprised, after the civilities of my first reception, to find, instead of the leisure and tranquillity, which a rural life always promises, and, if well conducted, might always afford, a confused wildness of care, and a tumultuous hurry of diligence, by which every face was clouded, and every motion agitated. The old lady, who was my father's relation, was, indeed, very full of the happiness which she received from my visit and according to the forms of obsolete breeding, insisted that I should recompense the long delay of my

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company with a promise not to leave her till winter. But, amidst all her kindness and caresses, she very frequently turned her head aside, and whispered, with anxious earnestness, some order to her daughters, which never failed to send them out with unpolite precipitation. Sometimes her impatience would not suffer her to stay behind; she begged my pardon, she must leave me for a moment; she went, and returned and sat down again, but was again disturbed by some new care, dismissed her daughters with the same trepidation, and followed them with the same countenance of business and solicitude.

However I was alarmed at this show of eagerness and disturbance, and however my curiosity was excited by such busy preparations as naturally promised some great event, I was yet too much a stranger to gratify myself with enquiries; but finding none of the family in mourning, I pleased myself with imagining that I should rather see a wedding than a funeral.

At last we sat down to supper, when I was informed that one of the young ladies, after whom I thought myself obliged to enquire, was under a necessity of attending some affair that could not be neglected: Soon afterward my relation began to talk of the regularity of her family, and the inconvenience of London hours; and at last let me know that they had purposed that night to go to bed sooner than was usual, because they were to rise early in the morning to make cheesecakes. This hint sent me to my chamber, to which I was accompanied by all the ladies, who begged me to excuse some

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large sieves of leaves and flowers that covered two thirds of the floor, for they intended to distil them when they were dry, and they had no other room that so conveniently received the rising sun.

The scent of the plants hindered me from rest, and therefore I rose early in the morning with a resolution to explore my new habitation. I stole unperceived by my busy cousins into the garden, where I found nothing either more great or elegant, than in the same number of acres cultivated for the market. Of the gardener I soon learned that his lady was the greatest manager in that part of the country, and that I was come hither at the time in which I might learn to make more pickles and conserves, than could be seen at any other house a hundred miles round.

It was not long before her ladyship gave me sufficient opportunities of knowing her character, for she was too much pleased with her own accomplishments to conceal them, and took occasion, from some sweetmeats which she set next day upon the table, to discourse for two long hours upon robs and jellies; laid down the best methods of conserving, reserving, and preserving all sorts of fruit; told us with great contempt of the London lady in the neighbourhood, by whom these terms were very often confounded; and hinted how much she should be ashamed to set before company, at her own house, sweetmeats of so dark a colour as she had often seen at mistress Sprightly's.

It is, indeed, the great business of her life, to watch the skillet on the fire, to see it simmer with

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the due degree of heat, and to snatch it off at the moment of projection; and the employments to which she has bred her daughters, are to turn rose-leaves in the shade, to pick out the seeds of currants with a quill, to gather fruit without bruising it, and to extract bean-flower water for the skin. Such are the tasks with which every day, since I came hither, has begun and ended, to which the early hours of life are sacrificed, and in which that time is passing away which never shall return.

But to reason or expostulate are hopeless attempts. The lady has settled her opinions, and maintains the dignity of her own performances with all the firmness of stupidity accustomed to be flattered. Her daughters, having never seen any house but their own, believe their mother's excellence on her own word. Her husband is a mere sportsman, who is pleased to see his table well furnished, and thinks the day sufficiently successful, in which he brings home a leash of hares to be potted by his wife.

After a few days I pretended to want books, but my lady soon told me that none of her books would suit my taste; for her part she never loved to see young women give their minds to such follies, by which they would only learn to use hard words; she bred up her daughters to understand a house, and whoever should marry them, if they knew any thing of good cookery, would never repent it.

There are, however, some things in the culinary sciences too sublime for youthful intellects, mysteries into which they must not be initiated till the

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years of serious maturity, and which are referred to the day of marriage, as the supreme qualification for connubial life. She makes an orange pudding, which is the envy of all the neighbourhood, and which she has hitherto found means of mixing and baking with such secrecy, that the ingredient to which it owes its flavour has never been discovered. She, indeed, conducts this great affair with all the caution that human policy can suggest. It is never known before-hand when this pudding will be produced; she takes the ingredients privately into her own closet, employs her maids and daughters in different parts of the house, orders the oven to be heated for a pie, and places the pudding in it with her own hands, the mouth of the oven is then stopped, and all enquiries are vain.

The composition of the pudding she has, however, promised Clarinda, that if she pleases her in marriage, she shall be told without reserve. But the art of making English capers she has not yet persuaded herself to discover, but seems resolved that secret shall perish with her, as some alchymists have obstinately suppressed the art of transmuting metals.

I once ventured to lay my fingers on her book of receipts, which she left upon the table, having intelligence that a vessel of gooseberry wine had burst the hoops. But though the importance of the event sufficiently engrossed her care, to prevent any recollection of the danger to which her secrets were exposed, I was not able to make use of the golden moments; for this treasure of hereditary knowledge was so well concealed by the

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manner of spelling used by her grandmother, her mother, and herself, that I was totally unable to understand it, and lost the opportunity of consulting the oracle, for want of knowing the language in which its answers were returned.

It is, indeed, necessary, if I have any regard to her ladyship's esteem, that I should apply myself to some of these economical accomplishments; for I overheard her, two days ago, warning her daughters, by my mournful example, against negligence of pastry, and ignorance in carving: for you saw, said she, that, with all her pretensions to knowledge, she turned the partridge the wrong way when she attempted to cut it, and, I believe, scarcely knows the difference between paste raised, and paste in a dish.

The reason, Mr. Rambler, why I have laid Lady Bustle's character before you, is a desire to be informed whether, in your opinion, it is worthy of imitation, and whether I shall throw away the books which I have hitherto thought it my duty to read, for *the lady's closet opened*, *the complete servant maid*, and *the court cook*, and resign all curiosity after right and wrong, for the art of scalding damascenes without bursting them, and preserving the whiteness of pickled mushrooms.

Lady Bustle has, indeed, by this incessant application to fruits and flowers, contracted her cares into a narrow space, and set herself free from many perplexities with which other minds are disturbed. She has no curiosity after the events of a war, or the fate of heroes in distress; she can hear, without the least emotion, the ravage of a fire, or devastations of a

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storm; her neighbours grow rich or poor, come into the world or go out of it, without regard, while she is pressing the jelly-bag, or airing the store-room; but I cannot perceive that she is more free from disquiets than those whose understandings take a wider range. Her marigolds, when they are almost cured, are often scattered by the wind, and the rain sometimes falls upon fruit, when it ought to be gathered dry. While her artificial wines are fermenting, her whole life is restlessness and anxiety. Her sweetmeats are not always bright, and the maid sometimes forgets the just proportions of salt and pepper, when venison is to be baked. Her conserves mould, her wines sour, and pickles mother; and, like all the rest of mankind, she is every day mortified with the defeat of her schemes, and the disappointment of her hopes.

With regard to vice and virtue she seems a kind of neutral being. She has no crime but luxury, nor any virtue but chastity; she has no desire to be praised but for her cookery; nor wishes any ill to the rest of mankind, but that whenever they aspire to a feast, their custards may be wheyish, and their pie-crusts tough.

I am now very impatient to know whether I am to look on these ladies as the great patterns of our sex, and to consider conserves and pickles as the business of my life; whether the censures which I now suffer be just, and whether the brewers of wines, and the distillers of washes, have a right to look with insolence on the weakness of

CORNELIA.

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NUMB. 52. SATURDAY, *Sept.* 15, 1750.

——— Quoties flenti Thesëius heros
Siste modum, dixit, neque enim fortuna querenda
Sola tua est, similes aliorum respice casus,
Mitius ista feres. OVID.

How oft in vain the son of Theseus said,
The stormy sorrows be with patience laid;
Nor are thy fortunes to be wept alone;
Weigh others' woes, and learn to bear thy own.
CATCOTT.

AMONG the various methods of consolation, to which the miseries inseparable from our present state have given occasion, it has been, as I have already remarked, recommended by some writers to put the sufferer in mind of heavier pressures, and more excruciating calamities, than those of which he has himself reason to complain.

This has, in all ages, been directed and practised; and, in conformity to this custom, Lipsius, the great modern master of the Stoick philosophy, has, in his celebrated treatise on *steadiness of mind*, endeavoured to fortify the breast against too much sensibility of misfortune, by enumerating the evils which have in former ages fallen upon the world, the devastation of wide-extended regions, the sack of cities, and massacre of nations. And the common voice of the multitude, uninstructed by precept, and unprejudiced by authority, which, in questions that relate to the heart of man, is, in my opinion, more decisive than the learning of Lip-

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sius, seems to justify the efficacy of this procedure; for one of the first comforts which one neighbour administers to another, is a relation of the like infelicity, combined with circumstances of greater bitterness.

But this medicine of the mind is like many remedies applied to the body, of which, though we see the effects, we are unacquainted with the manner of operation, and of which, therefore, some, who are unwilling to suppose any thing out of the reach of their own sagacity, have been inclined to doubt whether they have really those virtues for which they are celebrated, and whether their reputation is not the mere gift of fancy, prejudice, and credulity.

Consolation, or comfort, are words which, in their proper acceptation, signify some alleviation of that pain to which it is not in our power to afford the proper and adequate remedy; they imply rather an augmentation of the power of bearing, than a diminution of the burthen. A prisoner is relieved by him that sets him at liberty, but receives comfort from such as suggest considerations by which he is made patient under the inconvenience of confinement. To that grief which arises from a great loss, he only brings the true remedy, who makes his friend's condition the same as before; but he may be properly termed a comforter, who by persuasion extenuates the pain of poverty, and shews, in the style of Hesiod, that *half is more than the whole.*

It is perhaps, not immediately obvious, how it can lull the memory of misfortune, or appease the throbbings of angnish, to hear that others are more

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miserable; others, perhaps, unknown or wholly indifferent, whose prosperity raises no envy, and whose fall can gratify no resentment. Some topicks of comfort arising, like that which gave hope and spirit to the captive of Sesostris, from the perpetual vicissitudes of life, and mutability of human affairs, may as properly raise the dejected as depress the proud, and have an immediate tendency to exhilarate and revive. But how can it avail the man who languishes in the gloom of sorrow, without prospect of emerging into the sunshine of cheerfulness, to hear that others are sunk yet deeper in the dungeon of misery, shackled with heavier chains, and surrounded with darker desperation?

The solace arising from this consideration seems indeed the weakest of all others, and is perhaps never properly applied, but in cases where there is no place for reflections of more speedy and pleasing efficacy. But even from such calamities life is by no means free; a thousand ills incurable, a thousand losses irreparable, a thousand difficulties insurmountable are known, or will be known, by all the sons of men. Native deformity cannot be rectified, a dead friend cannot return, and the hours of youth trifled away in folly, or lost in sickness, cannot be restored.

Under the oppression of such melancholy, it has been found useful to take a survey of the world, to contemplate the various scenes of distress in which mankind are struggling round us, and acquaint ourselves with the *terribiles visu formæ*, the various shapes of misery, which make havock of ter-

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restrial happiness, range all corners almost without restraint, trample down our hopes at the hour of harvest, and, when we have built our schemes to the top, ruin their foundations.

The first effect of this meditation is, that it furnishes a new employment for the mind, and engages the passions on remoter objects; as kings have sometimes freed themselves from a subject too haughty to be governed and too powerful to be crushed, by posting him in a distant province, till his popularity has subsided, or his pride been repressed. The attention is dissipated by variety, and acts more weakly upon any single part, as that torrent may be drawn off to different channels, which, pouring down in one collected body, cannot be resisted. This species of comfort is, therefore, unavailing in severe paroxysms of corporal pain, when the mind is every instant called back to misery, and in the first shock of any sudden evil; but will certainly be of use against encroaching melancholy, and a settled habit of gloomy thoughts.

It is further advantageous, as it supplies us with opportunities of making comparisons in our own favour. We know that very little of the pain, or pleasure, which does not begin and end in our senses, is otherwise than relative; we are rich or poor, great or little, in proportion to the number that excel us, or fall beneath us, in any of these respects; and therefore, a man, whose uneasiness arises from reflection on any misfortune that throws him below those with whom he was once equal, is comforted by finding that he is not yet the lowest.

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There is another kind of comparison, less tending towards the vice of envy, very well illustrated by an old poet *, whose system will not afford many reasonable motives to content. "It is," says he, "pleasing to look from shore upon the tumults of a storm, and to see a ship struggling with the billows; it is pleasing, not because the pain of another can give us delight, but because we have a stronger impression of the happiness of safety." Thus, when we look abroad, and behold the multitudes that are groaning under evils heavier than those which we have experienced, we shrink back to our own state, and instead of repining that so much must be felt, learn to rejoice that we have not more to feel.

By this observation of the miseries of others, fortitude is strengthened, and the mind brought to a more extensive knowledge of her own powers. As the heroes of action catch the flame from one another, so they to whom Providence has allotted the harder task of suffering with calmness and dignity, may animate themselves by the remembrance of those evils which have been laid on others, perhaps naturally as weak as themselves, and bear up with vigour and resolution against their own oppressions, when they see it possible that more severe afflictions may be borne.

There is still another reason why, to many minds, the relation of other men's infelicity may give a lasting and continual relief. Some, not well instructed in the measures by which Providence distributes

* Lucretius. C.

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happiness, are perhaps misled by divines, who, as Bellarmine makes temporal prosperity one of the characters of the true church, have represented wealth and ease as the certain concomitants of virtue, and the unfailing result of the divine approbation. Such sufferers are dejected in their misfortunes, not so much for what they feel, as for what they dread; not because they cannot support the sorrows, or endure the wants, of their present condition, but because they consider them as only the beginnings of more sharp and more lasting pains. To these mourners it is an act of the highest charity to represent the calamities which not only virtue has suffered, but virtue has incurred; to inform them that one evidence of a future state, is the uncertainty of any present reward for goodness; and to remind them, from the highest authority, of the distresses and penury of men *of whom the world was not worthy.*

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NUMB. 53. TUESDAY, *Sept.* 18, 1750.

Φείδεο τῶν κτεανῶν. *Epigram. Vet.*

Husband thy possessions.

THERE is scarcely among the evils of human life any so generally dreaded as poverty. Every other species of misery, those, who are not much accustomed to disturb the present moment with reflection, can easily forget, because it is not always forced upon their regard; but it is impossible to pass a day or an hour in the confluxes of men, without seeing how much indigence is exposed to contumely, neglect, and insult; and, in its lowest state, to hunger and nakedness; to injuries against which every passion is in arms, and to wants which nature cannot sustain.

Against other evils the heart is often hardened by true or by false notions of dignity and reputation: thus we see dangers of every kind faced with willingness, because bravery in a good or bad cause is never without its encomiasts and admirers. But in the prospect of poverty, there is nothing but gloom and melancholy; the mind and body suffer together; its miseries bring no alleviations; it is a state in which every virtue is obscured, and in which no conduct can avoid reproach: a state in which cheerfulness is insensibility, and dejection sullenness, of which the hardships are without honour, and the labours without reward.

Of these calamities there seems not to be wanting a general conviction; we hear on every side the noise

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of trade, and see the streets thronged with numberless multitudes, whose faces are clouded with anxiety, and whose steps are hurried by precipitation, from no other motive than the hope of gain; and the whole world is put in motion, by the desire of that wealth, which is chiefly to be valued as it secures us from poverty; for it is more useful for defence than acquisition, and is not so much able to procure good as to exclude evil.

Yet there are always some whose passions or follies lead them to a conduct opposite to the general maxims and practice of mankind; some who seem to rush upon poverty with the same eagerness with which others avoid it, who see their revenues hourly lessened, and the estates which they inherit from their ancestors mouldering away, without resolution to change their course of life; who persevere against all remonstrances, and go forward with full career, though they see before them the precipice of destruction.

It is not my purpose in this paper, to expostulate with such as ruin their fortunes by expensive schemes of buildings and gardens, which they carry on with the same vanity that prompted them to begin, chusing, as it happens in a thousand other cases, the remote evil before the lighter, and deferring the shame of repentance till they incur the miseries of distress. Those for whom I intend my present admonitions, are the thoughtless, the negligent, and the dissolute; who having, by the viciousness of their own inclinations, or the seducements of alluring companions, been engaged in

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habits of expence, and accustomed to move in a certain round of pleasures disproportioned to their condition, are without power to extricate themselves from the enchantments of custom, avoid thought because they know it will be painful, and continue from day to day, and from month to month, to anticipate their revenues, and sink every hour deeper into the gulphs of usury and extortion.

This folly has less claim to pity, because it cannot be imputed to the vehemence of sudden passion; nor can the mischief which it produces be extenuated as the effect of any single act; which rage, or desire, might execute before there could be time for an appeal to reason. These men are advancing towards misery by soft approaches, and destroying themselves, not by the violence of a blow, which, when once given, can never be recalled, but by a slow poison, hourly repeated, and obstinately continued.

This conduct is so absurd when it is examined by the unprejudiced eye of rational judgment, that nothing but experience could evince its possibility; yet, absurd as it is, the sudden fall of some families, and the sudden rise of others, prove it to be common; and every year sees many wretches reduced to contempt and want, by their costly sacrifices to pleasure and vanity.

It is the fate of almost every passion, when it has passed the bounds which nature prescribes, to counteract its own purpose. Too much rage hinders the warrior from circumspection, too much eagerness of profit hurts the credit of the trader, too much ardour takes away from the lover that

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easiness of address with which ladies are delighted. Thus extravagance, though dictated by vanity, and incited by voluptuousness, seldom procures ultimately either applause or pleasure.

If praise be justly estimated by the character of those from whom it is received, little satisfaction will be given to the spendthrift by the encomiums which he purchases. For who are they that animate him in his pursuits, but young men thoughtless and abandoned like himself, unacquainted with all on which the wisdom of nations has impressed the stamp of excellence, and devoid alike of knowledge and of virtue? By whom is his profusion praised, but by wretches who consider him as subservient to their purposes, Sirens that entice him to shipwreck, and Cyclops that are gaping to devour him?

Every man, whose knowledge, or whose virtue, can give value to his opinion, looks with scorn, or pity, neither of which can afford much gratification to pride, on him whom the panders of luxury have drawn into the circle of their influence, and whom he sees parcelled out among the different ministers of folly, and about to be torn to pieces by tailors and jockies, vintners and attornies, who at once rob and ridicule him, and who are secretly triumphing over his weakness, when they present new incitements to his appetite, and heighten his desires by counterfeited applause.

Such is the praise that is purchased by prodigality. Even when it is yet not discovered to be false, it is the praise only of those whom it is reproachful to please, and whose sincerity is corrupted by their in-

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terest; men who live by the riots which they encourage, and who know that whenever their pupil grows wise, they shall lose their power. Yet with such flatteries, if they could last, might the cravings of vanity, which is seldom very delicate, be satisfied; but the time is always hastening forward when this triumph, poor as it is, shall vanish, and when those who now surround him with obsequiousness and compliments, fawn among his equipage, and animate his riots, shall turn upon him with insolence, and reproach him with the vices promoted by themselves.

And as little pretensions has the man who squanders his estate, by vain or vicious expences, to greater degrees of pleasure than are obtained by others. To make any happiness sincere, it is necessary that we believe it to be lasting; since whatever we suppose ourselves in danger of losing, must be enjoyed with solicitude and uneasiness, and the more value we set upon it, the more must the present possession be imbittered. How can he then be envied for his felicity, who knows that its continuance cannot be expected, and who is conscious that a very short time will give him up to the gripe of poverty, which will be harder to be borne, as he has given way to more excesses, wantoned in greater abundance, and indulged his appetites with more profuseness?

It appears evident that frugality is necessary even to complete the pleasure of expence; for it may be generally remarked of those who squander what they know their fortune not sufficient to allow, that in their most jovial expence, there always breaks out some proof of discontent and impatience; they

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either scatter with a kind of wild desperation, and affected lavishness, as criminals brave the gallows when they cannot escape it, or pay their money with a peevish anxiety, and endeavour at once to spend idly, and to save meanly: having neither firmness to deny their passions, nor courage to gratify them, they murmur at their own enjoyments, and poison the bowl of pleasure by reflection on the cost.

Among these men there is often the vociferation of merriment, but very seldom the tranquillity of cheerfulness; they inflame their imaginations to a kind of momentary jollity, by the help of wine and riot, and consider it as the first business of the night to stupify recollection, and lay that reason asleep which disturbs their gaiety, and calls upon them to retreat from ruin.

But this poor broken satisfaction is of short continuance, and must be expiated by a long series of misery and regret. In a short time the creditor grows impatient, the last acre is sold, the passions and appetites still continue their tyranny, with incessant calls for their usual gratifications, and the remainder of life passes away in vain repentance, or impotent desire.

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NUMB. 54. SATURDAY, *Sept.* 22, 1750.

Truditur dies die,
Novæque pergunt interire lunæ;
Tu secanda marmora
Locas sub ipsum funus, et sepulchri
Immemor struis domos. HOR.

Day presses on the heels of day,
And moons increase to their decay;
But you, with thoughtless pride elate,
Unconscious of impending fate,
Command the pillar'd dome to rise,
When lo! thy tomb forgotten lies. FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I HAVE lately been called, from a mingled life of business and amusement, to attend the last hours of an old friend; an office which has filled me, if not with melancholy, at least with serious reflections, and turned my thoughts towards the contemplation of those subjects, which though of the utmost importance, and of indubitable certainty, are generally secluded from our regard, by the jollity of health, the hurry of employment, and even by the calmer diversions of study and speculation; or if they become accidental topicks of conversation and argument, yet rarely sink deep into the heart, but give occasion only to some subtilties of reasoning, or elegancies of declamation, which are heard, applauded, and forgotten.

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It is, indeed, not hard to conceive how a man accustomed to extend his views through a long concatenation of causes and effects, to trace things from their origin to their period, and compare means with ends, may discover the weakness of human schemes; detect the fallacies by which mortals are deluded; shew the insufficiency of wealth, honours, and power, to real happiness; and please himself, and his auditors, with learned lectures on the vanity of life.

But though the speculatist may see and shew the folly of terrestrial hopes, fears, and desires, every hour will give proofs that he never felt it. Trace him through the day or year, and you will find him acting upon principles which he has in common with the illiterate and unenlightened, angry and pleased like the lowest of the vulgar, pursuing, with the same ardour, the same designs, grasping, with all the eagerness of transport, those riches which he knows he cannot keep, and swelling with the applause which he has gained by proving that applause is of no value.

The only conviction that rushes upon the soul, and takes away from our appetites and passions the power of resistance, is to be found, where I have received it, at the bed of a dying friend. To enter this school of wisdom is not the peculiar privilege of geometricians; the most sublime and important precepts require no uncommon opportunities, nor laborious preparations; they are enforced without the aid of eloquence, and understood without skill in analytick science. Every tongue can utter them, and every understanding can conceive them. He that wishes

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in earnest to obtain just sentiments concerning his condition, and would be intimately acquainted with the world, may find instructions on every side. He that desires to enter behind the scene, which every art has been employed to decorate, and every passion labours to illuminate, and wishes to see life stripped of those ornaments which make it glitter on the stage, and exposed in its natural meanness, impotence, and nakedness, may find all the delusion laid open in the chamber of disease: he will there find vanity divested of her robes, power deprived of her sceptre, and hypocrisy without her mask.

The friend whom I have lost was a man eminent for genius, and, like others of the same class, sufficiently pleased with acceptance and applause. Being caressed by those who have preferments and riches in their disposal, he considered himself as in the direct road of advancement, and had caught the flame of ambition by approaches to its object. But in the midst of his hopes, his projects, and his gaieties, he was seized by a lingering disease, which, from its first stage, he knew to be incurable. Here was an end of all his visions of greatness and happiness; from the first hour that his health declined, all his former pleasures grew tasteless. His friends expected to please him by those accounts of the growth of his reputation, which were formerly certain of being well received; but they soon found how little he was now affected by compliments, and how vainly they attempted, by flattery, to exhilarate the languor of weakness, and relieve the solicitude of approaching death. Whoever would know how much piety and virtue surpass

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all external goods, might here have seen them weighed against each other, where all that gives motion to the active, and elevation to the eminent, all that sparkles in the eye of hope, and pants in the bosom of suspicion, at once became dust in the balance, without weight and without regard. Riches, authority, and praise, lose all their influence when they are considered as riches which to-morrow shall be bestowed upon another, authority which shall this night expire for ever, and praise which, however merited, or however sincere, shall, after a few moments, be heard no more.

In those hours of seriousness and wisdom, nothing appeared to raise his spirits, or gladden his heart, but the recollection of acts of goodness; nor to excite his attention, but some opportunity for the exercise of the duties of religion. Every thing that terminated on this side of the grave was received with coldness and indifference, and regarded rather in consequence of the habit of valuing it, than from any opinion that it deserved value; it had little more prevalence over his mind than a bubble that was now broken, a dream from which he was awake. His whole powers were engrossed by the consideration of another state, and all conversation was tedious, that had not some tendency to disengage him from human affairs, and open his prospects into futurity.

It is now past, we have closed his eyes, and heard him breathe the groan of expiration. At the sight of this last conflict, I felt a sensation never known to me before; a confusion of passions, an awful stillness of sorrow, a gloomy terrour without a name. The thoughts that entered my soul were too strong

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to be diverted, and too piercing to be endured; but such violence cannot be lasting, the storm subsided in a short time, I wept, retired, and grew calm.

I have from that time frequently revolved in my mind, the effects which the observation of death produces, in those who are not wholly without the power and use of reflection; for, by far the greater part, it is wholly unregarded. Their friends and their enemies sink into the grave without raising any uncommon emotion, or reminding them that they are themselves on the edge of the precipice, and that they must soon plunge into the gulph of eternity.

It seems to me remarkable that death increases our veneration for the good, and extenuates our hatred of the bad. Those virtues which once we envied, as Horace observes, because they eclipsed our own, can now no longer obstruct our reputation, and we have therefore no interest to suppress their praise. That wickedness, which we feared for its malignity, is now become impotent, and the man whose name filled us with alarm, and rage, and indignation, can at last be considered only with pity, or contempt.

When a friend is carried to his grave, we at once find excuses for every weakness, and palliations of every fault; we recollect a thousand endearments, which before glided off our minds without impression, a thousand favours unrepaid, a thousand duties unperformed, and wish, vainly wish for his return, not so much that we may receive, as that we may bestow happiness, and recompense that kindness which before we never understood.

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There is not, perhaps, to a mind well instructed, a more painful occurrence, than the death of one whom we have injured without reparation. Our crime seems now irretrievable, it is indelibly recorded, and the stamp of fate is fixed upon it. We consider, with the most afflictive anguish, the pain which we have given, and now cannot alleviate, and the losses which we have caused, and now cannot repair.

Of the same kind are the emotions which the death of an emulator or competitor produces. Whoever had qualities to alarm our jealousy, had excellence to deserve our fondness; and to whatever ardour of opposition interest may inflame us, no man ever outlived an enemy, whom he did not then wish to have made a friend. Those who are versed in literary history know, that the elder Scaliger was the redoubted antagonist of Cardan and Erasmus; yet at the death of each of his great rivals he relented, and complained that they were snatched away from him before their reconciliation was completed.

Tu-ne etiam moreris? Ah! quid me linquis, Erasme,
Ante meus quam sit conciliatus amor?

Art thou too fallen? ere anger could subside
And love return, has great Erasmus died?

Such are the sentiments with which we finally review the effects of passion, but which we sometimes delay till we can no longer rectify our errours. Let us therefore make haste to do what we shall certainly at last wish to have done; let us return the caresses

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of our friends, and endeavour by mutual endearments to heighten that tenderness which is the balm of life. Let us be quick to repent of injuries while repentance may not be a barren anguish, and let us open our eyes to every rival excellence, and pay early and willingly those honours which justice will compel us to pay at last.

ATHANATUS.

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NUMB. 55. TUESDAY, *Sept.* 25, 1750.

Maturo propior desine funeri
Inter ludere virgines,
Et stellis maculam spargere candidis:
Non siquid Pholoen satis
Et te, Chlori, decet.——— HOR.

Now near to death that comes but slow,
Now thou art stepping down below;
Sport not amongst the blooming maids,
But think on ghosts and empty shades:
What suits with Pholoe in her bloom,
Grey Chloris, will not thee become;
A bed is different from a tomb.

CREECH.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I HAVE been but a little time conversant in the world, yet I have already had frequent opportunities of observing the little efficacy of remonstrance and complaint, which, however extorted by oppression, or supported by reason, are detested by one part of the world as rebellion, censured by another as peevishness, by some heard with an appearance of compassion, only to betray any of those sallies of vehemence and resentment, which are apt to break out upon encouragement, and by others passed over with indifference and neglect, as matters in which they have no concern, and which if they should endeavour to examine or regulate, they might draw mischief upon themselves.

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Yet since it is no less natural for those who think themselves injured to complain, than for others to neglect their complaints, I shall venture to lay my case before you, in hopes that you will enforce my opinion, if you think it just, or endeavour to rectify my sentiments, if I am mistaken. I expect at least, that you will divest yourself of partiality, and that whatever your age or solemnity may be, you will not, with the dotard's insolence, pronounce me ignorant and foolish, perverse and refractory, only because you perceive that I am young.

My father dying when I was but ten years old, left me, and a brother two years younger than myself, to the care of my mother, a woman of birth and education, whose prudence or virtue he had no reason to distrust. She felt, for some time, all the sorrow which nature calls forth, upon the final separation of persons dear to one another; and as her grief was exhausted by its own violence, it subsided into tenderness for me and my brother, and the year of mourning was spent in caresses, consolations, and instruction, in celebration of my father's virtues, in professions of perpetual regard to his memory, and hourly instances of such fondness as gratitude will not easily suffer me to forget.

But when the term of this mournful felicity was expired, and my mother appeared again without the ensigns of sorrow, the ladies of her acquaintance began to tell her, upon whatever motives, that it was time to live like the rest of the world; a powerful argument, which is seldom used to a woman without effect. Lady Giddy was inces-

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stantly relating the occurrences of the town, and Mrs. Gravely told her privately, with great tenderness, that it began to be publickly observed how much she overacted her part, and that most of her acquaintance suspected her hope of procuring another husband to be the true ground of all that appearance of tenderness and piety.

All the officiousness of kindness and folly was busied to change her conduct. She was at one time alarmed with censure, and at another fired with praise. She was told of balls, where others shone only because she was absent; of new comedies, to which all the town was crowding; and of many ingenious ironies, by which domestick diligence was made contemptible.

It is difficult for virtue to stand alone against fear on one side, and pleasure on the other; especially when no actual crime is proposed, and prudence itself can suggest many reasons for relaxation and indulgence. My mamma was at last persuaded to accompany Miss Giddy to a play. She was received with a boundless profusion of compliments, and attended home by a very fine gentleman. Next day she was with less difficulty prevailed on to play at Mrs. Gravely's, and came home gay and lively; for the distinctions that had been paid her awakened her vanity, and good luck had kept her principles of frugality from giving her disturbance. She now made her second entrance into the world, and her friends were sufficiently industrious to prevent any return to her former life; every morning brought messages of invitation, and every evening was passed

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in places of diversion, from which she for some time complained that she had rather be absent. In a short time she began to feel the happiness of acting without controul, of being unaccountable for her hours, her expences, and her company; and learned by degrees to drop an expression of contempt, or pity, at the mention of ladies whose husbands were suspected of restraining their pleasures, or their play, and confessed that she loved to go and come as she pleased.

I was still favoured with some incidental precepts and transient endearments, and was now and then fondly kissed for smiling like my papa: but most part of her morning was spent in comparing the opinion of her maid and milliner, contriving some variation in her dress, visiting shops, and sending compliments; and the rest of the day was too short for visits, cards, plays, and concerts.

She now began to discover that it was impossible to educate children properly at home. Parents could not have them always in their sight; the society of servants was contagious; company produced boldness and spirit; emulation excited industry; and a large school was naturally the first step into the open world. A thousand other reasons she alleged, some of little force in themselves, but so well seconded by pleasure, vanity, and idleness, that they soon overcame all the remaining principles of kindness and piety, and both I and my brother were despatched to boarding schools.

How my mamma spent her time when she was thus disburthened I am not able to inform you, but I have reason to believe that trifles and amuse-

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ments took still faster hold of her heart. At first, she visited me at school, and afterwards wrote to me; but in a short time, both her visits and her letters were at an end, and no other notice was taken of me than to remit money for my support.

When I came home at the vacation, I found myself coldly received, with an observation, "that this girl will presently be a woman." I was, after the usual stay, sent to school again, and overheard my mother say, as I was a-going, "Well, now I shall recover."

In six months more I came again, and, with the usual childish alacrity, was running to my mother's embrace, when she stopt me with exclamations at the suddenness and enormity of my growth, having, she said, never seen any body shoot up so much at my age. She was sure no other girls spread at that rate, and she hated to have children look like women before their time. I was disconcerted, and retired without hearing any thing more than "Nay, if you are angry, Madam Steeple, you may walk off."

When once the forms of civility are violated, there remains little hope of return to kindness or decency. My mamma made this appearance of resentment a reason for continuing her malignity; and poor Miss Maypole, for that was my appellation, was never mentioned or spoken to but with some expression of anger or dislike.

She had yet the pleasure of dressing me like a child, and I know not when I should have been thought fit to change my habit, had I not been rescued by a maiden sister of my father, who could

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not bear to see women in hanging-sleeves, and therefore presented me with brocade for a gown, for which I should have thought myself under great obligations, had she not accompanied her favour with some hints that my mamma might now consider her age, and give me her ear-rings, which she had shewn long enough in publick places.

I now left the school, and came to live with my mamma, who considered me as an usurper that had seized the rights of a woman before they were due, and was pushing her down the precipice of age, that I might reign without a superiour. While I am thus beheld with jealousy and suspicion, you will readily believe that it is difficult to please. Every word and look is an offence. I never speak, but I pretend to some qualities and excellencies which it is criminal to possess; if I am gay, she thinks it early enough to coquette; if I am grave, she hates a prude in bibs; if I venture into company, I am in haste for a husband; if I retire to my chamber, such matron-like ladies are lovers of contemplation. I am on one pretence or other generally excluded from her assemblies, nor am I ever suffered to visit at the same place with my mamma. Every one wonders why she does not bring Miss more into the world, and when she comes home in vapours I am certain that she has heard either of my beauty or my wit, and expect nothing for the ensuing week but taunts and menaces, contradiction and reproaches.

Thus I live in a state of continual persecution, only because I was born ten years too soon, and

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cannot stop the course of nature or of time, but am unhappily a woman before my mother can willingly cease to be a girl. I believe you would contribute to the happiness of many families, if, by any arguments or persuasions, you could make mothers ashamed of rivalling their children; if you could shew them, that though they may refuse to grow wise, they must inevitably grow old; and that the proper solaces of age are not musick and compliments, but wisdom and devotion; that those who are so unwilling to quit the world will soon be driven from it; and that it is therefore their interest to retire while there yet remain a few hours for nobler employments.

I am, &c.

NUMB. 56. SATURDAY, *Sept.* 29, 1750.

——— *Valeat res ludicra, si me*
Palma negata macrum, donata reducit opimum. HOR.

Farewell the stage; for humbly I disclaim
Such fond pursuits of pleasure, or of fame,
If I must sink in shame, or swell with pride,
As the gay palm is granted or denied. FRANCIS.

NOTHING is more unpleasing than to find that offence has been received when none was intended, and that pain has been given to those who were not guilty of any provocation. As the great end of society is mutual beneficence, a good man is always uneasy when he finds himself acting in opposition to

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the purposes of life; because, though his conscience may easily acquit him of *malice prepense*, of settled hatred or contrivances of mischief, yet he seldom can be certain, that he has not failed by negligence, or indolence; that he has not been hindered from consulting the common interest by too much regard to his own ease, or too much indifference to the happiness of others.

Nor is it necessary, that, to feel this uneasiness, the mind should be extended to any great diffusion of generosity, or melted by uncommon warmth of benevolence; for that prudence which the world teaches, and a quick sensibility of private interest, will direct us to shun needless enmities; since there is no man whose kindness we may not some time want, or by whose malice we may not some time suffer.

I have therefore frequently looked with wonder, and now and then with pity, at the thoughtlessness with which some alienate from themselves the affections of all whom chance, business, or inclination, brings in their way. When we see a man pursuing some darling interest, without much regard to the opinion of the world, we justly consider him as corrupt and dangerous, but are not long in discovering his motives; we see him actuated by passions which are hard to be resisted, and deluded by appearances which have dazzled stronger eyes. But the greater part of those who set mankind at defiance by hourly irritation, and who live but to infuse malignity, and multiply enemies, have no hopes to foster, no designs to promote, nor any expectations of attaining power by insolence, or of climbing to greatness by tramp-

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ling on others. They give up all the sweets of kindness, for the sake of peevishness, petulance, or gloom; and alienate the world by neglect of the common forms of civility, and breach of the established laws of conversation.

Every one must, in the walks of life, have met with men of whom all speak with censure, though they are not chargeable with any crime, and whom none can be persuaded to love, though a reason can scarcely be assigned why they should be hated; and who, if their good qualities and actions sometimes force a commendation, have their panegyrick always concluded with confessions of disgust; "he is a good man, but I cannot like him." Surely such persons have sold the esteem of the world at too low a price, since they have lost one of the rewards of virtue, without gaining the profits of wickedness.

This ill economy of fame is sometimes the effect of stupidity: Men whose perceptions are languid and sluggish, who lament nothing but loss of money, and feel nothing but a blow, are often at a difficulty to guess why they are encompassed with enemies, though they neglect all those arts by which men are endeared to one another. They comfort themselves that they have lived irreproachably; that none can charge them with having endangered his life, or diminished his possessions; and therefore conclude that they suffer by some invincible fatality, or impute the malice of their neighbours to ignorance or envy. They wrap themselves up in their innocence, and enjoy the congratulations of their own

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hearts, without knowing or suspecting that they are every day deservedly incurring resentments, by withholding from those with whom they converse, that regard, or appearance of regard, to which every one is entitled by the customs of the world.

There are many injuries which almost every man feels, though he does not complain, and which, upon those whom virtue, elegance, or vanity, have made delicate and tender, fix deep and lasting impressions; as there are many arts of graciousness and conciliation, which are to be practised without expence, and by which those may be made our friends, who have never received from us any real benefit. Such arts, when they include neither guilt nor meanness, it is surely reasonable to learn, for who would want that love which is so easily to be gained? And such injuries are to be avoided; for who would be hated without profit?

Some, indeed, there are, for whom the excuse of ignorance or negligence cannot be alleged, because it is apparent that they are not only careless of pleasing, but studious to offend; that they contrive to make all approaches to them difficult and vexatious, and imagine that they aggrandize themselves by wasting the time of others in useless attendance, by mortifying them with slights, and teazing them with affronts.

Men of this kind are generally to be found among those that have not mingled much in general conversation, but spent their lives amidst the obsequiousness of dependants, and the flattery of parasites; and by long consulting only their own

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inclination, have forgotten that others have claim to the same deference.

Tyranny thus avowed, is indeed an exuberance of pride, by which all mankind is so much enraged, that it is never quietly endured, except in those who can reward the patience which they exact; and insolence is generally surrounded only by such whose baseness inclines them to think nothing insupportable that produces gain, and who can laugh at scurrility and rudeness with a luxurious table and an open purse.

But though all wanton provocations and contemptuous insolence are to be diligently avoided, there is no less danger in timid compliance and tame resignation. It is common for soft and fearful tempers to give themselves up implicitly to the direction of the bold, the turbulent, and the overbearing; of those whom they do not believe wiser or better than themselves; to recede from the best designs where opposition must be encountered, and to fall off from virtue for fear of censure.

Some firmness and resolution is necessary to the discharge of duty; but it is a very unhappy state of life in which the necessity of such struggles frequently occurs; for no man is defeated without some resentment, which will be continued with obstinacy while he believes himself in the right, and exerted with bitterness, if even to his own conviction he is detected in the wrong.

Even though no regard be had to the external consequences of contrariety and dispute, it must be painful to a worthy mind to put others in pain, and there

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will be danger lest the kindest nature may be vitiated by too long a custom of debate and contest.

I am afraid that I may be taxed with insensibility by many of my correspondents, who believe their contributions unjustly neglected. And, indeed, when I sit before a pile of papers, of which each is the production of laborious study, and the offspring of a fond parent, I, who know the passions of an author, cannot remember how long they have lain in my boxes unregarded, without imagining to myself the various changes of sorrow, impatience, and resentment, which the writers must have felt in this tedious interval.

These reflections are still more awakened, when, upon perusal, I find some of them calling for a place in the next paper, a place which they have never yet obtained: others writing in a style of superiority and haughtiness, as secure of deference, and above fear of criticism; others humbly offering their weak assistance with softness and submission, which they believe impossible to be resisted; some introducing their compositions with a menace of the contempt which he that refuses them will incur; others applying privately to the booksellers for their interest and solicitation; every one by different ways endeavouring to secure the bliss of publication. I cannot but consider myself as placed in a very incommodious situation, where I am forced to repress confidence, which it is pleasing to indulge, to repay civilities with appearances of neglect, and so frequently to offend those by whom I never was offended.

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I know well how rarely an author, fired with the beauties of his new composition, contains his raptures in his own bosom, and how naturally he imparts to his friends his expectations of renown; and as I can easily conceive the eagerness with which a new paper is snatched up, by one who expects to find it filled with his own production, and perhaps has called his companions to share the pleasure of a second perusal, I grieve for the disappointment which he is to feel at the fatal inspection. His hopes, however, do not yet forsake him; he is certain of giving lustre the next day. The next day comes, and again he pants with expectation, and having dreamed of laurels and Parnassus, casts his eyes upon the barren page, with which he is doomed never more to be delighted.

For such cruelty what atonement can be made? For such calamities what alleviation can be found? I am afraid that the mischief already done must be without reparation, and all that deserves my care is prevention for the future. Let therefore the next friendly contributor, whoever he be, observe the cautions of Swift, and write secretly in his own chamber, without communicating his design to his nearest friend, for the nearest friend will be pleased with an opportunity of laughing. Let him carry it to the post himself, and wait in silence for the event. If it is published and praised, he may then declare himself the author; if it be suppressed, he may wonder in private without much vexation; and if it be censured, he may join in the cry, and lament the dulness of the writing generation.

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NUMB. 57. TUESDAY, *October* 2, 1750.

Non intelligunt homines quam magnum vectigal sit parsimonia.
TULL.

The world has not yet learned the riches of frugality.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I AM always pleased when I see literature made useful, and scholars descending from that elevation, which, as it raises them above common life, must likewise hinder them from beholding the ways of men otherwise than in a cloud of bustle and confusion. Having lived a life of business, and remarked how seldom any occurrences emerge for which great qualities are required, I have learned the necessity of regarding little things; and though I do not pretend to give laws to the legislators of mankind, or to limit the range of those powerful minds that carry light and heat through all the regions of knowledge, yet I have long thought, that the greatest part of those who lose themselves in studies by which I have not found that they grow much wiser, might, with more advantage both to the publick and themselves, apply their understandings to domestick arts, and store their minds with axioms of humble prudence, and private economy.

Your late paper on frugality was very elegant and pleasing, but, in my opinion, not sufficiently adapted to common readers, who pay little regard to the musick of periods, the artifice of connection, or the arrangement of the flowers of rhetorick; but

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require a few plain and cogent instructions, which may sink into the mind by their own weight.

Frugality is so necessary to the happiness of the world, so beneficial in its various forms to every rank of men, from the highest of human potentates, to the lowest labourer or artificer; and the miseries which the neglect of it produces are so numerous and so grievous, that it ought to be recommended with every variation of address, and adapted to every class of understanding.

Whether those who treat morals as a science will allow frugality to be numbered among the virtues, I have not thought it necessary to inquire. For I, who draw my opinions from a careful observation of the world, am satisfied with knowing what is abundantly sufficient for practice, that if it be not a virtue, it is, at least, a quality, which can seldom exist without some virtues, and without which few virtues can exist. Frugality may be termed the daughter of prudence, the sister of temperance, and the parent of liberty. He that is extravagant will quickly become poor, and poverty will enforce dependence, and invite corruption; it will almost always produce a passive compliance with the wickedness of others; and there are few who do not learn by degrees to practise those crimes which they cease to censure.

If there are any who do not dread poverty as dangerous to virtue, yet mankind seem unanimous enough in abhorring it as destructive to happiness; and all to whom want is terrible, upon whatever principle, ought to think themselves obliged to

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learn the sage maxims of our parsimonious ancestors, and attain the salutary arts of contracting expence; for without frugality none can be rich, and with it very few would be poor.

To most other acts of virtue or exertions of wisdom, a concurrence of many circumstances is necessary, some previous knowledge must be attained, some uncommon gifts of nature possessed, or some opportunity produced by an extraordinary combination of things; but the mere power of saving what is already in our hands, must be easy of acquisition to every mind; and as the example of Bacon may shew, that the highest intellect cannot safely neglect it, a thousand instances will every day prove, that the meanest may practise it with success.

Riches cannot be within the reach of great numbers, because to be rich is to possess more than is commonly placed in a single hand; and, if many could obtain the sum which now makes a man wealthy, the name of wealth must then be transferred to still greater accumulation. But I am not certain that it is equally impossible to exempt the lower classes of mankind from poverty; because, though whatever be the wealth of the community, some will always have least, and he that has less than any other is comparatively poor; yet I do not see any coactive necessity that many should be without the indispensable conveniences of life; but am sometimes inclined to imagine, that, casual calamities excepted, there might, by universal prudence, be procured an universal exemption from want; and that he who should

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happen to have least, might notwithstanding have enough.

But without entering too far into speculations which I do not remember that any political calculator has attempted, and in which the most perspicacious reasoner may be easily bewildered, it is evident that they to whom Providence has allotted no other care but of their own fortune and their own virtue, which make far the greater part of mankind, have sufficient incitements to personal frugality, since, whatever might be its general effect upon provinces or nations, by which it is never likely to be tried, we know with certainty, that there is scarcely any individual entering the world, who, by prudent parsimony, may not reasonably promise himself a cheerful competence in the decline of life.

The prospect of penury in age is so gloomy and terrifying, that every man who looks before him must resolve to avoid it; and it must be avoided generally by the science of sparing. For, though in every age there are some, who by bold adventures, or by favourable accidents, rise suddenly to riches, yet it is dangerous to indulge hopes of such rare events: and the bulk of mankind must owe their affluence to small and gradual profits, below which their expence must be resolutely reduced.

You must not therefore think me sinking below the dignity of a practical philosopher, when I recommend to the consideration of your readers, from the statesman to the apprentice, a position replete with mercantile wisdom, *A penny saved is two-pence got;* which may, I think, be accommodated to all

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conditions, by observing not only that they who pursue any lucrative employment will save time when they forbear expence, and that the time may be employed to the increase of profit; but that they who are above such minute considerations will find, by every victory over appetite or passion, new strength added to the mind, will gain the power of refusing those solicitations by which the young and vivacious are hourly assaulted, and in time set themselves above the reach of extravagance and folly.

It may, perhaps, be inquired by those who are willing rather to cavil than to learn, what is the just measure of frugality? and when expence, not absolutely necessary, degenerates into profusion? To such questions no general answer can be returned; since the liberty of spending, or necessity of parsimony, may be varied without end by different circumstances. It may, however, be laid down as a rule never to be broken, that a *man's voluntary expence should not exceed his revenue.* A maxim so obvious and incontrovertible, that the civil law ranks the prodigal with the madman, and debars them equally from the conduct of their own affairs. Another precept arising from the former, and indeed included in it, is yet necessary to be distinctly impressed upon the warm, the fanciful, and the brave; *Let no man anticipate uncertain profits.* Let no man presume to spend upon hopes, to trust his own abilities for means of deliverance from penury, to give a loose to his present desires, and leave the reckoning to fortune or to virtue.

To these cautions, which, I suppose, are, at least

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among the graver part of mankind, undisputed, I will add another, *Let no man squander against his inclination.* With this precept it may be, perhaps, imagined easy to comply; yet if those whom profusion has buried in prisons, or driven into banishment, were examined, it would be found that very few were ruined by their own choice, or purchased pleasure with the loss of their estates; but that they suffered themselves to be borne away by the violence of those with whom they conversed, and yielded reluctantly to a thousand prodigalities, either from a trivial emulation of wealth and spirit, or a mean fear of contempt and ridicule; an emulation for the prize of folly, or the dread of the laugh of fools.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

SOPHRON.

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NUMB. 58. SATURDAY, *October* 6, 1750.

———Improbæ
Crescunt divitiæ, tamen
Curtæ nescio quid semper abest rei. HOR.

But, while in heaps his wicked wealth ascends,
He is not of his wish possess'd;
There 's something wanting still to make him bless'd.
FRANCIS.

As the love of money has been, in all ages, one of the passions that have given great disturbance to the tranquillity of the world, there is no topick more copiously treated by the ancient moralists than the folly of devoting the heart to the accumulation of riches. They who are acquainted with these authors need not be told how riches excite pity, contempt, or reproach, whenever they are mentioned; with what numbers of examples the danger of large possessions is illustrated; and how all the powers of reason and eloquence have been exhausted in endeavours to eradicate a desire, which seems to have intrenched itself too strongly in the mind to be driven out, and which, perhaps, had not lost its power, even over those who declaimed against it, but would have broken out in the poet or the sage, if it had been excited by opportunity, and invigorated by the approximation of its proper object.

Their arguments have been, indeed, so unsuccessful, that I know not whether it can be shewn, that by all the wit and reason which this favourite

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cause has called forth, a single convert was ever made; that even one man has refused to be rich, when to be rich was in his power, from the conviction of the greater happiness of a narrow fortune; or disburthened himself of wealth when he had tried its inquietudes, merely to enjoy the peace and leisure and security of a mean and unenvied state.

It it true, indeed, that many have neglected opportunities of raising themselves to honours and to wealth, and rejected the kindest offers of fortune: but however their moderation may be boasted by themselves, or admired by such as only view them at a distance, it will be, perhaps, seldom found that they value riches less, but that they dread labour or danger more than others; they are unable to rouse themselves to action, to strain in the race of competition, or to stand the shock of contest; but though they, therefore, decline the toil of climbing, they nevertheless wish themselves aloft, and would willingly enjoy what they dare not seize.

Others have retired from high stations, and voluntarily condemned themselves to privacy and obscurity. But, even these will not afford many occasions of triumph to the philosopher; for they have commonly either quitted that only which they thought themselves unable to hold, and prevented disgrace by resignation; or they have been induced to try new measures by general inconstancy, which always dreams of happiness in novelty, or by a gloomy disposition, which is disgusted in the same degree with every state, and wishes every scene of life to change as soon as it is beheld. Such men

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found high and low stations equally unable to satisfy the wishes of a distempered mind, and were unable to shelter themselves in the closest retreat from disappointment, solicitude, and misery.

Yet though these admonitions have been thus neglected by those, who either enjoyed riches, or were able to procure them, it is not rashly to be determined that they are altogether without use; for since far the greatest part of mankind must be confined to conditions comparatively mean, and placed in situations from which they naturally look up with envy to the eminences before them, those writers cannot be thought ill employed that have administered remedies to discontent almost universal, by shewing, that what we cannot reach may very well be forborne, that the inequality of distribution, at which we murmur, is for the most part less than it seems, and that the greatness, which we admire at a distance, has much fewer advantages, and much less splendour, when we are suffered to approach it.

It is the business of moralists to detect the frauds of fortune, and to shew that she imposes upon the careless eye, by a quick succession of shadows, which will shrink to nothing in the gripe; that she disguises life in extrinsick ornaments, which serve only for show, and are laid aside in the hours of solitude, and of pleasure; and that when greatness aspires either to felicity or to wisdom, it shakes off those distinctions which dazzle the gazer, and awe the supplicant.

It may be remarked, that they whose condition

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has not afforded them the light of moral or religious instruction, and who collect all their ideas by their own eyes, and digest them by their own understandings, seem to consider those who are placed in ranks of remote superiority, as almost another and higher species of beings. As themselves have known little other misery than the consequences of want, they are with difficulty persuaded that where there is wealth there can be sorrow, or that those who glitter in dignity, and glide along in affluence, can be acquainted with pains and cares like those which lie heavy upon the rest of mankind.

This prejudice is, indeed, confined to the lowest meanness, and the darkest ignorance; but it is so confined only because others have been shewn its folly, and its falsehood, because it has been opposed in its progress by history and philosophy, and hindered from spreading its infection by powerful preservatives.

The doctrine of the contempt of wealth, though it has not been able to extinguish avarice or ambition, or suppress that reluctance with which a man passes his days in a state of inferiority, must, at least, have made the lower conditions less grating and wearisome, and has consequently contributed to the general security of life, by hindering that fraud and violence, rapine and circumvention, which must have been produced by an unbounded eagerness of wealth, arising from an unshaken conviction that to be rich is to be happy.

Whoever finds himself incited, by some violent impulse of passion, to pursue riches as the chief end

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of being, must surely be so much alarmed by the successive admonitions of those whose experience and sagacity have recommended them as the guides of mankind, as to stop and consider whether he is about to engage in an undertaking that will reward his toil, and to examine, before he rushes to wealth, through right and wrong, what it will confer when he has acquired it; and this examination will seldom fail to repress his ardour, and retard his violence.

Wealth is nothing in itself, it is not useful but when it departs from us; its value is found only in that which it can purchase, which, if we suppose it put to its best use by those that possess it, seems not much to deserve the desire or envy of a wise man. It is certain that, with regard to corporal enjoyment, money can neither open new avenues to pleasure, nor block up the passages of anguish. Disease and infirmity still continue to torture and enfeeble, perhaps exasperated by luxury, or promoted by softness. With respect to the mind, it has rarely been observed, that wealth contributes much to quicken the discernment, enlarge the capacity, or elevate the imagination; but may, by hiring flattery, or laying diligence asleep, confirm errour, and harden stupidity.

Wealth cannot confer greatness, for nothing can make that great, which the decree of nature has ordained to be little. The bramble may be placed in a hot-bed, but can never become an oak. Even royalty itself is not able to give that dignity which it happens not to find, but oppresses feeble minds, though it may elevate the strong. The world has been governed in the name of kings, whose existence

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has scarcely been perceived by any real effects beyond their own palaces.

When therefore the desire of wealth is taking hold of the heart, let us look round and see how it operates upon those whose industry or fortune has obtained it. When we find them oppressed with their own abundance, luxurious without pleasure, idle without ease, impatient and querulous in themselves, and despised or hated by the rest of mankind, we shall soon be convinced, that if the real wants of our condition are satisfied, there remains little to be sought with solicitude, or desired with eagerness.

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NUMB. 59. TUESDAY, *October* 9, 1750.

Est aliquid fatale malum per verba levare,
Hoc querulam Prognen Halcyonenque facit:
Hoc erat in solo quare Pæantius antro
Voce fatigaret Lemnia saxa sua.
Strangulat inclusus dolor, atque exæstuat intus,
Cogitur et vires multiplicare suas. OVID.

Complaining oft gives respite to our grief;
From hence the wretched Progne sought relief,
Hence the Pæantian chief his fate deplores,
And vents his sorrow to the Lemnian shores:
In vain by secrecy we would assuage
Our cares; conceal'd they gather tenfold rage.
F. LEWIS.

IT is common to distinguish men by the names of animals which they are supposed to resemble. Thus a hero is frequently termed a lion, and a statesman a fox, an extortioner gains the appellation of vulture, and a fop the title of monkey. There is also among the various anomalies of character, which a survey of the world exhibits, a species of beings in human form, which may be properly marked out as the screech-owls of mankind.

These screech-owls seem to be settled in an opinion that the great business of life is to complain, and that they were born for no other purpose than to disturb the happiness of others, to lessen the little comforts, and shorten the short pleasures of our condition, by painful remembrances of the past, or melancholy prognosticks of the future; their

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only care is to crush the rising hope, to damp the kindling transport, and allay the golden hours of gaiety with the hateful dross of grief and suspicion.

To those whose weakness of spirits, or timidity of temper, subjects them to impressions from others, and who are apt to suffer by fascination, and catch the contagion of misery, it is extremely unhappy to live within the compass of a screech-owl's voice; for it will often fill their ears in the hour of dejection, terrify them with apprehensions, which their own thoughts would never have produced, and sadden, by intruded sorrows, the day which might have been passed in amusements or in business; it will burthen the heart with unnecessary discontents, and weaken for a time that love of life which is necessary to the vigorous prosecution of any undertaking.

Though I have, like the rest of mankind, many failings and weaknesses, I have not yet, by either friends or enemies, been charged with superstition; I never count the company which I enter, and I look at the new moon indifferently over either shoulder. I have, like most other philosophers, often heard the cuckoo without money in my pocket, and have been sometimes reproached as fool-hardy for not turning down my eyes when a raven flew over my head. I never go home abruptly because a snake crosses my way, nor have any particular dread of a climacterical year; yet I confess that, with all my scorn of old women, and their tales, I consider it as an unhappy day when I happen to be greeted, in the morning, by Suspirius the screech-owl.

I have now known Suspirius fifty-eight years and

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four months, and have never yet passed an hour with him in which he has not made some attack upon my quiet. When we were first acquainted, his great topick was the misery of youth without riches; and whenever we walked out together he solaced me with a long enumeration of pleasures, which, as they were beyond the reach of my fortune, were without the verge of my desires, and which I should never have considered as the objects of a wish, had not his unseasonable representations placed them in my sight.

Another of his topicks is the neglect of merit, with which he never fails to amuse every man whom he sees not eminently fortunate. If he meets with a young officer, he always informs him of gentlemen whose personal courage is unquestioned, and whose military skill qualifies them to command armies, that have, notwithstanding all their merit, grown old with subaltern commissions. For a genius in the church, he is always provided with a curacy for life. The lawyer he informs of many men of great parts and deep study, who have never had an opportunity to speak in the courts: And meeting Serenus the physician, "Ah, doctor," says he, "what a-foot still, when so many blockheads are rattling in their chariots? I told you seven years ago that you would never meet with encouragement, and I hope you will now take more notice, when I tell you that your Greek, and your diligence, and your honesty, will never enable you to live like yonder apothecary, who prescribes to his own shop, and laughs at the physician."

Suspirius has, in his time, intercepted fifteen authors in their way to the stage; persuaded nine and

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thirty merchants to retire from a prosperous trade for fear of bankruptcy, broke off an hundred and thirteen matches by prognostications of unhappiness, and enabled the small-pox to kill nineteen ladies, by perpetual alarms of the loss of beauty.

Whenever my evil stars bring us together, he never fails to represent to me the folly of my pursuits, and informs me that we are much older than when we began our acquaintance, that the infirmities of decrepitude are coming fast upon me, that whatever I now get, I shall enjoy but a little time, that fame is to a man tottering on the edge of the grave of very little importance, and that the time is at hand when I ought to look for no other pleasures than a good dinner and an easy chair.

Thus he goes on in his unharmonious strain, displaying present miseries, and foreboding more, νυκτικοραξ ἀει θανατήφορος, every syllable is loaded with misfortune, and death is always brought nearer to the view. Yet, what always raises my resentment and indignation, I do not perceive that his mournful meditations have much effect upon himself. He talks and has long talked of calamities, without discovering otherwise than by the tone of his voice, that he feels any of the evils which he bewails or threatens, but has the same habit of uttering lamentations, as others of telling stories, and falls into expressions of condolence for past, or apprehension of future mischiefs, as all men studious of their ease have recourse to those subjects upon which they can most fluently or copiously discourse.

It is reported of the Sybarites, that they destroyed

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all their cocks, that they might dream out their morning dreams without disturbance. Though I would not so far promote effeminacy as to propose the Sybarites for an example, yet since there is no man so corrupt or foolish, but something useful may be learned from him, I could wish that, in imitation of a people not often to be copied, some regulations might be made to exclude screech-owls from all company, as the enemies of mankind, and confine them to some proper receptacle, where they may mingle sighs at leisure, and thicken the gloom of one another.

Thou prophet of evil, says Homer's Agamemnon, *thou never foretellest me good, but the joy of thy heart is to predict misfortunes.* Whoever is of the same temper, might there find the means of indulging his thoughts, and improving his vein of denunciation, and the flock of screech-owls might hoot together without injury to the rest of the world.

Yet, though I have so little kindness for this dark generation, I am very far from intending to debar the soft and tender mind from the privilege of complaining, when the sigh arises from the desire not of giving pain, but of gaining ease. To hear complaints with patience, even when complaints are vain, is one of the duties of friendship; and though it must be allowed that he suffers most like a hero that hides his grief in silence,

Spem vultu simulat, premit altum corde dolorem.

His outward smiles conceal'd his inward smart. DRYDEN.

yet it cannot be denied, that he who complains acts like a man, like a social being, who looks for help

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from his fellow-creatures. Pity is to many of the unhappy a source of comfort in hopeless distresses, as it contributes to recommend them to themselves, by proving that they have not lost the regard of others; and heaven seems to indicate the duty even of barren compassion, by inclining us to weep for evils which we cannot remedy.

NUMB. 60. SATURDAY, *October* 13, 1750.

Quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,
Plenius et melius Chrysippo et Crantore dicit. HOR.

Whose works the beautiful and base contain,
Of vice and virtue more instructive rules,
Than all the sober sages of the schools. FRANCIS.

ALL joy or sorrow for the happiness or calamities of others is produced by an act of the imagination, that realises the event however fictitious, or approximates it however remote, by placing us, for a time, in the condition of him whose fortune we contemplate; so that we feel, while the deception lasts, whatever motions would be excited by the same good or evil happening to ourselves.

Our passions are therefore more strongly moved, in proportion as we can more readily adopt the pains or pleasure proposed to our minds, by recognising them as once our own, or considering them as naturally incident to our state of life. It is not easy for the most artful writer to give us an interest in happiness or misery, which we think ourselves never

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likely to feel, and with which we have never yet been made acquainted. Histories of the downfal of kingdoms, and revolutions of empires, are read with great tranquillity; the imperial tragedy pleases common auditors only by its pomp of ornament, and grandeur of ideas; and the man whose faculties have been engrossed by business, and whose heart never fluttered but at the rise or fall of the stocks, wonders how the attention can be seized, or the affection agitated, by a tale of love.

Those parallel circumstances and kindred images, to which we readily conform our minds, are, above all other writings, to be found in narratives of the lives of particular persons; and therefore no species of writing seems more worthy of cultivation than biography, since none can be more delightful or more useful, none can more certainly enchain the heart by irresistible interest, or more widely diffuse instruction to every diversity of condition.

The general and rapid narratives of history, which involve a thousand fortunes in the business of a day, and complicate innumerable incidents in one great transaction, afford few lessons applicable to private life, which derives its comforts and its wretchedness from the right or wrong management of things, which nothing but their frequency makes considerable, *Parva si non fiant quotidie*, says Pliny, and which can have no place in those relations which never descend below the consultation of senates, the motions of armies, and the schemes of conspirators.

I have often thought that there has rarely passed a life of which a judicious and faithful narrative would not be useful. For, not only every man has,

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in the mighty mass of the world, great numbers in the same condition with himself, to whom his mistakes and miscarriages, escapes and expedients, would be of immediate and apparent use; but there is such an uniformity in the state of man, considered apart from adventitious and separable decorations and disguises, that there is scarce any possibility of good or ill, but is common to human kind. A great part of the time of those who are placed at the greatest distances by fortune, or by temper, must unavoidably pass in the same manner; and though, when the claims of nature are satisfied, caprice, and vanity, and accident, begin to produce discriminations and peculiarities, yet the eye is not very heedful or quick, which cannot discover the same causes still terminating their influence in the same effects, though sometimes accelerated, sometimes retarded, or perplexed by multiplied combinations. We are all prompted by the same motives, all deceived by the same fallacies, all animated by hope, obstructed by danger, entangled by desire, and seduced by pleasure.

It is frequently objected to relations of particular lives, that they are not distinguished by any striking or wonderful vicissitudes. The scholar who passed his life among his books, the merchant who conducted only his own affairs, the priest, whose sphere of action was not extended beyond that of his duty, are considered as no proper objects of publick regard, however they might have excelled in their several stations, whatever might have been their learning, integrity, and piety. But this notion arises from false measures of excellence and dignity, and must

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be eradicated by considering, that in the esteem of uncorrupted reason, what is of most use is of most value.

It is, indeed, not improper to take honest advantages of prejudice, and to gain attention by a celebrated name; but the business of the biographer is often to pass slightly over those performances and incidents, which produce vulgar greatness, to lead the thoughts into domestick privacies, and display the minute details of daily life, where exterior appendages are cast aside, and men excel each other only by prudence and by virtue. The account of Thuanus is, with great propriety, said by its author to have been written, that it might lay open to posterity the private and familiar character of that man, *cujus ingenium et candorem ex ipsius scriptis sunt olim semper miraturi*, whose candour and genius will to the end of time be by his writings preserved in admiration.

There are many invisible circumstances which, whether we read as inquirers after natural or moral knowledge, whether we intend to enlarge our science, or increase our virtue, are more important than publick occurrences. Thus Sallust, the great master of nature, has not forgot, in his account of Catiline, to remark that *his walk was now quick, and again slow*, as an indication of a mind revolving something with violent commotion. Thus the story of Melancthon affords a striking lecture on the value of time, by informing us, that when he made an appointment, he expected not only the hour, but the minute to be fixed, that the day might not run out in the idleness of suspense: and

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all the plans and enterprizes of De Witt are now of less importance to the world, than that part of his personal character, which represents him as *careful of his health, and negligent of his life.*

But biography has often been allotted to writers who seem very little acquainted with the nature of their task, or very negligent about the performance. They rarely afford any other account than might be collected from publick papers, but imagine themselves writing a life when they exhibit a chronological series of actions or preferments; and so little regard the manners or behaviour of their heroes, that more knowledge may be gained of a man's real character, by a short conversation with one of his servants, than from a formal and studied narrative, begun with his pedigree, and ended with his funeral.

If now and then they condescend to inform the world of particular facts, they are not always so happy as to select the most important. I know not well what advantage posterity can receive from the only circumstance by which Tickell has distinguished Addison from the rest of mankind, *the irregularity of his pulse:* nor can I think myself overpaid for the time spent in reading the life of Malherb by being enabled to relate after the learned biographer, that Malherb had two predominant opinions; one, that the looseness of a single woman might destroy all her boast of ancient descent; the other, that the French beggars made use very improperly and barbarously of the phrase *noble Gentleman*, because either word included the sense to both.

There are, indeed, some natural reasons why

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these narratives are often written by such as were not likely to give much instruction or delight, and why most accounts of particular persons are barren and useless. If a life be delayed till interest and envy are at an end, we may hope for impartiality, but must expect little intelligence; for the incidents which give excellence to biography are of a volatile and evanescent kind, such as soon escape the memory, and are rarely transmitted by tradition. We know how few can pourtray a living acquaintance, except by his most prominent and observable particularities, and the grosser features of his mind; and it may be easily imagined how much of this little knowledge may be lost in imparting it, and how soon a succession of copies will lose all resemblance of the original.

If the biographer writes from personal knowledge, and makes haste to gratify the publick curiosity, there is danger lest his interest, his fear, his gratitude, or his tenderness, overpower his fidelity, and tempt him to conceal, if not to invent. There are many who think it an act of piety to hide the faults or failings of their friends, even when they can no longer suffer by their detection; we therefore see whole ranks of characters adorned with uniform panegyrick, and not to be known from one another, but by extrinsick and casual circumstances. "Let me remember," says Hale, "when I find myself inclined to pity a criminal, that there is likewise a pity due to the country." If we owe regard to the memory of the dead, there is yet more respect to be paid to knowledge, to virtue, and to truth.

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NUMB. 61. TUESDAY, *October* 16, 1750.

Falsus honor juvat, et mendax infamia terret—
Quem, nisi mendosum et mendacem? HOR.

False praise can charm, unreal shame controul—
Whom but a vicious or a sickly soul? FRANCIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

IT is extremely vexatious to a man of eager and thirsty curiosity to be placed at a great distance from the fountain of intelligence, and not only never to receive the current of report till it has satiated the greatest part of the nation, but at last to find it mudded in its course, and corrupted with taints or mixtures from every channel through which it flowed.

One of the chief pleasures of my life is to hear what passes in the world, to know what are the schemes of the politick, the aims of the busy, and the hopes of the ambitious; what changes of publick measures are approaching; who is likely to be crushed in the collision of parties; who is climbing to the top of power, and who is tottering on the precipice of disgrace. But as it is very common for us to desire most what we are least qualified to obtain, I have suffered this appetite of news to outgrow all the gratifications which my present situation can afford it; for being placed in a remote country, I am condemned always to confound the future with the past, to form prognostications of events no longer doubtful, and to con-

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sider the expediency of schemes already executed or defeated. I am perplexed with a perpetual deception in my prospects, like a man pointing his telescope at a remote star, which before the light reaches his eye has forsaken the place from which it was emitted.

The mortification of being thus always behind the active world in my reflections and discoveries, is exceedingly aggravated by the petulance of those whose health, or business, or pleasure, brings them hither from London. For, without considering the insuperable disadvantages of my condition, and the unavoidable ignorance which absence must produce, they often treat me with the utmost superciliousness of contempt, for not knowing what no human sagacity can discover; and sometimes seem to consider me as a wretch scarcely worthy of human converse, when I happen to talk of the fortune of a bankrupt, or propose the healths of the dead, when I warn them of mischiefs already incurred, or wish for measures that have been lately taken. They seem to attribute to the superiority of their intellects what they only owe to the accident of their condition, and think themselves indisputably entitled to airs of insolence and authority, when they find another ignorant of facts, which, because they echoed in the streets of London, they suppose equally publick in all other places, and known where they could neither be seen, related, nor conjectured.

To this haughtiness they are indeed too much encouraged by the respect which they receive amongst us, for no other reason than that they

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come from London. For no sooner is the arrival of one of these disseminators of knowledge known in the country, than we crowd about him from every quarter, and by innumerable inquiries flatter him into an opinion of his own importance. He sees himself surrounded by multitudes, who propose their doubts, and refer their controversies, to him, as to a being descended from some nobler region, and he grows on a sudden oraculous and infallible, solves all difficulties, and sets all objections at defiance.

There is, in my opinion, great reason for suspecting, that they sometimes take advantage of this reverential modesty, and impose upon rustick understandings, with a false show of universal intelligence; for I do not find that they are willing to own themselves ignorant of any thing, or that they dismiss any inquirer with a positive and decisive answer. The court, the city, the park, and exchange, are to those men of unbounded observation equally familiar, and they are alike ready to tell the hour at which stocks will rise, or the ministry be changed.

A short residence at London entitles a man to knowledge, to wit, to politeness, and to a despotick and dictatorial power of prescribing to the rude multitude, whom he condescends to honour with a biennial visit; yet, I know not well upon what motives, I have lately found myself inclined to cavil at this prescription, and to doubt whether it be not, on some occasions, proper to withhold our veneration, till we are more authentically convinced of the merits of the claimant.

It is well remembered here, that about seven years

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ago, one Frolick,' a tall boy, with lank hair, remarkable for stealing eggs, and sucking them, was taken from the school in this parish, and sent up to London to study the law. As he had given amongst us no proofs of a genius designed by nature for extraordinary performances, he was, from the time of his departure, totally forgotten, nor was there any talk of his vices or virtues, his good or his ill fortune, till last summer a report burst upon us, that Mr. Frolick was come down in the first post-chaise which this village had seen, having travelled with such rapidity that one of his postillions had broke his leg, and another narrowly escaped suffocation in a quicksand; but that Mr. Frolick seemed totally unconcerned, for such things were never heeded at London.

Mr. Frolick next day appeared among the gentlemen at their weekly meeting on the bowling-green, and now were seen the effects of a London education. His dress, his language, his ideas, were all new, and he did not much endeavour to conceal his contempt of every thing that differed from the opinions, or practice, of the modish world. He showed us the deformity of our skirts and sleeves, informed us where hats of the proper size were to be sold, and recommended to us the reformation of a thousand absurdities in our clothes, our cookery, and our conversation. When any of his phrases were unintelligible, he could not suppress the joy of confessed superiority, but frequently delayed the explanation, that he might enjoy his triumph over our barbarity.

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When he is pleased to entertain us with a story, he takes care to crowd into it names of streets, squares, and buildings, with which he knows we are unacquainted. The favourite topicks of his discourse are the pranks of drunkards, and the tricks put upon country gentlemen by porters and link-boys. When he is with ladies, he tells them of the innumerable pleasures to which he can introduce them; but never fails to hint how much they will be deficient, at their first arrival, in the knowledge of the town. What it is *to know the town*, he has not indeed hitherto informed us, though there is no phrase so frequent in his mouth, nor any science which he appears to think of so great a value, or so difficult attainment.

But my curiosity has been most engaged by the recital of his own adventures and achievements. I have heard of the union of various characters in single persons, but never met with such a constellation of great qualities as this man's narrative affords. Whatever has distinguished the hero; whatever has elevated the wit; whatever has endeared the lover, are all concentered in Mr. Frolick, whose life has, for seven years, been a regular interchange of intrigues, dangers, and waggeries, and who has distinguished himself in every character that can be feared, envied, or admired.

I question whether all the officers of the royal navy can bring together, from all their journals, a collection of so many wonderful escapes as this man has known upon the Thames, on which he has been a thousand and a thousand times on the point of pe-

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rishing, sometimes by the terrours of foolish women in the same boat, sometimes by his own acknowledged imprudence in passing the river in the dark, and sometimes by shooting the bridge under which he has rencountered mountainous waves, and dreadful cataracts.

Nor less has been his temerity by land, nor fewer his hazards. He has reeled with giddiness on the top of the Monument; he has crossed the street amidst the rush of coaches; he has been surrounded by robbers without number; he has headed parties at the playhouse; he has scaled the windows of every toast, of whatever condition; he has been hunted for whole winters by his rivals; he has slept upon bulks, he has cut chairs, he has bilked coachmen; he has rescued his friends from the bailiffs, has knocked down the constable, has bullied the justice, and performed many other exploits, that have filled the town with wonder and with merriment.

But yet greater is the fame of his understanding than his bravery; for he informs us, that he is, at London, the established arbitrator of all points of honour, and the decisive judge of all performances of genius; that no musical performer is in reputation till the opinion of Frolick has ratified his pretensions; that the theatres suspend their sentence till he begins the clap or hiss, in which all are proud to concur; that no publick entertainment has failed or succeeded, but because he opposed or favoured it; that all controversies at the gaming-table are referred to his determination; that he adjusts the ceremonial at every assembly, and prescribes every fashion of pleasure or of dress.

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With every man whose name occurs in the papers of the day, he is intimately acquainted; and there are very few posts, either in the state or army, of which he has not more or less influenced the disposal. He has been very frequently consulted both upon war and peace; but the time is not yet come when the nation shall know how much it is indebted to the genius of Frolick.

Yet, notwithstanding all these declarations, I cannot hitherto persuade myself to see that Mr. Frolick has more wit, or knowledge, or courage, than the rest of mankind, or that any uncommon enlargement of his faculties has happened in the time of his absence. For when he talks on subjects known to the rest of the company, he has no advantage over us, but by catches of interruption, briskness of interrogation, and pertness of contempt; and therefore if he has stunned the world with his name, and gained a place in the first ranks of humanity, I cannot but conclude, that either a little understanding confers eminence at London, or that Mr. Frolick thinks us unworthy of the exertion of his powers, or that his faculties are benumbed by rural stupidity, as the magnetic needle loses its animation in the polar climes.

I would not, however, like many hasty philosophers, search after the cause till I am certain of the effect; and therefore I desire to be informed, whether you have yet heard the great name of Mr. Frolick. If he is celebrated by other tongues than his own, I shall willingly propagate his praise; but if he has swelled among us with empty boasts, and

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honours conferred only by himself, I shall treat him with rustick sincerity, and drive him as an impostor from this part of the kingdom to some region of more credulity. I am, &c.

RURICOLA.

NUMB. 62. SATURDAY, *October* 20, 1750.

Nunc ego Triptolemi cuperem conscendere currus,
Misit in ignotam qui rude semen humum:
Nunc ego Medeæ vellem frænare dracones,
Quos habuit fugiens arva, Corinthe, tua;
Nunc ego jactandas optarem sumere pennas,
Sive tuas, Perseu; Dædale, sive tuas. OVID.

Now would I mount his car, whose bounteous hand
First sow'd with teeming seed the furrow'd land:
Now to Medæa's dragons fix my reins,
That swiftly bore her from Corinthian plains:
Now on Dædalian waxen pinions stray,
Or those which wafted Perseus on his way. F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I AM a young woman of very large fortune, which, if my parents would have been persuaded to comply with the rules and customs of the polite part of mankind, might long since have raised me to the highest honours of the female world; but so strangely have they hitherto contrived to waste my life, that I am now on the borders of twenty, without having ever danced but at our monthly assembly, or

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been toasted but among a few gentlemen of the neighbourhood, or seen in any company in which it was worth a wish to be distinguished.

My father having impaired his patrimony in soliciting a place at court, at last grew wise enough to cease his pursuit; and to repair the consequences of expensive attendance and negligence of his affairs, married a lady much older than himself, who had lived in the fashionable world till she was considered as an incumbrance upon parties of pleasure, and as I can collect from incidental informations, retired from gay assemblies just time enough to escape the mortification of universal neglect.

She was, however, still rich, and not yet wrinkled; my father was too distressfully embarrassed to think much on any thing but the means of extrication, and though it is not likely that he wanted the delicacy which polite conversation will always produce in understandings not remarkably defective, yet he was contented with a match, by which he might be set free from inconveniencies, that would have destroyed all the pleasures of imagination, and taken from softness and beauty the power of delighting.

As they were both somewhat disgusted with their treatment in the world, and married, though without any dislike of each other, yet principally for the sake of setting themselves free from dependence on caprice or fashion, they soon retired into the country, and devoted their lives to rural business and diversions.

They had not much reason to regret the change of their situation; for their vanity, which had so long

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been tormented by neglect and disappointment, was here gratified with every honour that could be paid them. Their long familiarity with publick life made them the oracles of all those who aspired to intelligence, or politeness. My father dictated politicks, my mother prescribed the mode, and it was sufficient to entitle any family to some consideration, that they were known to visit at Mrs. Courtly's.

In this state they were, to speak in the style of novelists, made happy by the birth of your correspondent. My parents had no other child, I was therefore not brow-beaten by a saucy brother, or lost in a multitude of coheiresses, whose fortunes being equal, would probably have conferred equal merit, and procured equal regard; and as my mother was now old, my understanding and my person had fair play, my inquiries were not checked, my advances towards importance were not repressed, and I was soon suffered to tell my own opinions, and early accustomed to hear my own praises.

By these accidental advantages I was much exalted above the young ladies with whom I conversed, and was treated by them with great deference. I saw none who did not seem to confess my superiority, and to be held in awe by the splendour of my appearance; for the fondness of my father made him pleased to see me dressed, and my mother had no vanity nor expences to hinder her from concurring with his inclination.

Thus, Mr. Rambler, I lived without much desire after any thing beyond the circle of our visits; and here I should have quietly continued to portion

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out my time among my books, and my needle, and my company, had not my curiosity been every moment excited by the conversation of my parents, who, whenever they sit down to familiar prattle, and endeavour the entertainment of each other, immediately transport themselves to London, and relate some adventure in a hackney-coach, some frolick at a masquerade, some conversation in the Park, or some quarrel at an assembly, display the magnificence of a birth-night, relate the conquests of maids of honour, or give a history of diversions, shows, and entertainments, which I had never known but from their accounts.

I am so well versed in the history of the gay world, that I can relate, with great punctuality, the lives of all the last race of wits and beauties; can enumerate, with exact chronology, the whole succession of celebrated singers, musicians, tragedians, comedians, and harlequins; can tell to the last twenty years all the changes of fashions; and am, indeed, a complete antiquary with respect to head-dresses, dances, and operas.

You will easily imagine, Mr. Rambler, that I could not hear these narratives, for sixteen years together, without suffering some impression, and wishing myself nearer to those places where every hour brings some new pleasure, and life is diversified with an unexhausted succession of felicity.

I indeed often asked my mother why she left a place which she recollected with so much delight, and why she did not visit London once a year, like some other ladies, and initiate me in the world by

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showing me its amusements, its grandeur, and its variety. But she always told me that the days which she had seen were such as will never come again; that all diversion is now degenerated, that the conversation of the present age is insipid, that their fashions are unbecoming, their customs absurd, and their morals corrupt; that there is no ray left of the genius which enlightened the times that she remembers; that no one who had seen, or heard, the ancient performers, would be able to bear the bunglers of this despicable age; and that there is now neither politeness, nor pleasure, nor virtue, in the world. She therefore assures me that she consults my happiness by keeping me at home, for I should now find nothing but vexation and disgust, and she should be ashamed to see me pleased with such fopperies and trifles, as take up the thoughts of the present set of young people.

With this answer I was kept quiet for several years, and thought it no great inconvenience to be confined to the country, till last summer a young gentleman and his sister came down to pass a few months with one of our neighbours. They had generally no great regard for the country ladies, but distinguished me by a particular complaisance, and, as we grew intimate, gave me such a detail of the elegance, the splendour, the mirth, the happiness of the town, that I am resolved to be no longer buried in ignorance and obscurity, but to share with other wits the joy of being admired, and divide with other beauties the empire of the world.

I do not find, Mr. Rambler, upon a deliberate

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and impartial comparison, that I am excelled by Belinda in beauty, in wit, in judgment, in knowledge, or in any thing, but a kind of gay, lively familiarity, by which she mingles with strangers as with persons long acquainted, and which enables her to display her powers without any obstruction, hesitation, or confusion. Yet she can relate a thousand civilities paid to her in publick, can produce, from a hundred lovers, letters filled with praises, protestations, ecstacies, and despair; has been handed by dukes to her chair; has been the occasion of innumerable quarrels; has paid twenty visits in an afternoon; been invited to six balls in an evening, and been forced to retire to lodgings in the country from the importunity of courtship, and the fatigue of pleasure.

I tell you, Mr. Rambler, I will stay here no longer. I have at last prevailed upon my mother to send me to town, and shall set out in three weeks on the grand expedition. I intend to live in publick, and to crowd into the winter every pleasure which money can purchase, and every honour which beauty can obtain.

But this tedious interval how shall I endure? Cannot you alleviate the misery of delay by some pleasing description of the entertainments of the town? I can read, I can talk, I can think of nothing else; and if you will not sooth my impatience, heighten my ideas, and animate my hopes, you may write for those who have more leisure, but are not to expect any longer the honour of being read by those eyes which are now intent only on conquest and destruction. RHODOCLIA.

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NUMB. 63. TUESDAY, *October* 23, 1750.

——— Habebat sæpe ducentos,
Sæpe decem servos; modò reges atque tetrarchas,
Omnia magna loquens: modo, sit mihi mensa tripes, et
Concha salis puri, et togà, quæ defendere frigus,
Quamvis crassa, queat. HOR.

Now with two hundred slaves he crowds his train;
Now walks with ten. In high and haughty strain
At morn, of kings and governors he prates;
At night,—"A frugal table, O ye fates,
"A little shell the sacred salt to hold,
"And clothes, tho' coarse, to keep me from the cold."
FRANCIS.

IT has been remarked, perhaps, by every writer who has left behind him observations upon life, that no man is pleased with his present state; which proves equally unsatisfactory, says Horace, whether fallen upon by chance, or chosen with deliberation; we are always disgusted with some circumstance or other of our situation, and imagine the condition of others more abundant in blessings, or less exposed to calamities.

This universal discontent has been generally mentioned with great severity of censure, as unreasonable in itself, since of two, equally envious of each other, both cannot have the larger share of happiness, and as tending to darken life with unnecessary gloom, by withdrawing our minds from the contemplation and enjoyment of that happiness which our state affords us, and fixing our attention upon foreign objects, which we

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only behold to depress ourselves, and increase our misery by injurious comparisons.

When this opinion of the felicity of others predominates in the heart, so as to excite resolutions of obtaining, at whatever price, the condition to which such transcendent privileges are supposed to be annexed; when it bursts into action, and produces fraud, violence, and injustice, it is to be pursued with all the rigour of legal punishments. But while operating only upon the thoughts it disturbs none but him who has happened to admit it, and, however it may interrupt content, makes no attack on piety or virtue, I cannot think it so far criminal or ridiculous, but that it may deserve some pity, and admit some excuse.

That all are equally happy, or miserable, I suppose none is sufficiently enthusiastical to maintain; because though we cannot judge of the condition of others, yet every man has found frequent vicissitudes in his own state, and must therefore be convinced that life is susceptible of more or less felicity. What then shall forbid us to endeavour the alteration of that which is capable of being improved, and to grasp at augmentations of good, when we know it possible to be increased, and believe that any particular change of situation will increase it?

If he that finds himself uneasy may reasonably make efforts to rid himself from vexation, all mankind have a sufficient plea for some degree of restlessness, and the fault seems to be little more than too much temerity of conclusion, in favour of something not yet experienced, and too much readiness

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to believe, that the misery which our own passions and appetites produce, is brought upon us by accidental causes, and external efficients.

It is, indeed, frequently discovered by us, that we complained too hastily of peculiar hardships, and imagined ourselves distinguished by embarrassments, in which other classes of men are equally entangled. We often change a lighter for a greater evil, and wish ourselves restored again to the state from which we thought it desirable to be delivered. But this knowledge, though it is easily gained by the trial, is not always attainable any other way; and that error cannot justly be reproached, which reason could not obviate, nor prudence avoid.

To take a view at once distinct and comprehensive of human life, with all its intricacies of combination, and varieties of connexion, is beyond the power of mortal intelligences. Of the state with which practice has not acquainted us we snatch a glimpse, we discern a point, and regulate the rest by passion, and by fancy. In this inquiry every favourite prejudice, every innate desire, is busy to deceive us. We are unhappy, at least less happy than our nature seems to admit; we necessarily desire the melioration of our lot; what we desire we very reasonably seek, and what we seek we are naturally eager to believe that we have found. Our confidence is often disappointed, but our reason is not convinced, and there is no man who does not hope for something which he has not, though perhaps his wishes lie unactive, because he foresees the difficulty of attainment. As among the numerous students of Hermetick philosophy, not one

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appears to have desisted from the task of transmutation, from conviction of its impossibility, but from weariness of toil, or impatience of delay, a broken body, or exhausted fortune.

Irresolution and mutability are often the faults of men, whose views are wide, and whose imagination is vigorous and excursive, because they cannot confine their thoughts within their own boundaries of action, but are continually ranging over all the scenes of human existence, and consequently are often apt to conceive that they fall upon new regions of pleasure, and start new possibilities of happiness. Thus they are busied with a perpetual succession of schemes, and pass their lives in alternate elation and sorrow, for want of that calm and immovable acquiescence in their condition, by which men of slower understandings are fixed for ever to a certain point, or led on in the plain beaten track, which their fathers and grandsires have trod before them.

Of two conditions of life equally inviting to the prospect, that will always have the disadvantage which we have already tried; because the evils which we have felt we cannot extenuate; and though we have, perhaps from nature, the power as well of aggravating the calamity which we fear, as of heightening the blessing we expect, yet in those meditations which we indulge by choice, and which are not forced upon the mind by necessity, we have always the art of fixing our regard upon the more pleasing images, and suffer hope to dispose the lights by which we look upon futurity.

The good and ill of different modes of life are

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sometimes so equally opposed, that perhaps no man ever yet made his choice between them upon a full conviction, and adequate knowledge; and therefore fluctuation of will is not more wonderful, when they are proposed to the election, than oscillations of a beam charged with equal weights. The mind no sooner imagines itself determined by some prevalent advantage, than some convenience of equal weight is discovered on the other side, and the resolutions which are suggested by the nicest examination, are often repented as soon as they are taken.

Eumenes, a young man of great abilities, inherited a large estate from a father, long eminent in conspicuous employments. His father, harassed with competitions, and perplexed with multiplicity of business, recommended the quiet of a private station with so much force, that Eumenes for some years resisted every motion of ambitious wishes; but being once provoked by the sight of oppression, which he could not redress, he began to think it the duty of an honest man to enable himself to protect others, and gradually felt a desire of greatness, excited by a thousand projects of advantage to his country. His fortune placed him in the senate, his knowledge and eloquence advanced him at court, and he possessed that authority and influence which he had resolved to exert for the happiness of mankind.

He now became acquainted with greatness, and was in a short time convinced, that in proportion as the power of doing well is enlarged, the temptations to do ill are multiplied and enforced. He felt himself every moment in danger of being

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either seduced or driven from his honest purposes. Sometimes a friend was to be gratified, and sometimes a rival to be crushed, by means which his conscience could not approve. Sometimes he was forced to comply with the prejudices of the publick, and sometimes with the schemes of the ministry. He was by degrees wearied with perpetual struggles to unite policy and virtue, and went back to retirement as the shelter of innocence, persuaded that he could only hope to benefit mankind by a blameless example of private virtue. Here he spent some years in tranquillity and beneficence; but finding that corruption increased, and false opinions in government prevailed, he thought himself again summoned to posts of publick trust, from which new evidence of his own weakness again determined him to retire.

Thus men may be made inconstant by virtue and by vice, by too much or too little thought; yet inconstancy, however dignified by its motives, is always to be avoided, because life allows us but a small time for inquiry and experiment, and he that steadily endeavours at excellence, in whatever employment, will more benefit mankind than he that hesitates in chusing his part till he is called to the performance. The traveller that resolutely follows a rough and winding path, will sooner reach the end of his journey, than he that is always changing his direction, and wastes the hours of day-light in looking for smoother ground and shorter passages.

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NUMB. 64. SATURDAY, *October* 27, 1750.

Idem velle, et idem nolle, ea demum firma amicitia est. SALLUST.

To live in friendship is to have the same desires and the same aversions.

WHEN Socrates was building himself a house at Athens, being asked by one that observed the littleness of the design, why a man so eminent would not have an abode more suitable to his dignity? he replied, that he should think himself sufficiently accommodated, if he could see that narrow habitation filled with real friends. Such was the opinion of this great master of human life, concerning the infrequency of such an union of minds as might deserve the name of friendship, that among the multitudes whom vanity or curiosity, civility or veneration, crowded about him, he did not expect, that very spacious apartments would be necessary to contain all that should regard him with sincere kindness, or adhere to him with steady fidelity.

So many qualities are indeed requisite to the possibility of friendship, and so many accidents must concur to its rise and continuance, that the greatest part of mankind content themselves without it, and supply its place as they can, with interest and dependance.

Multitudes are unqualified for a constant and warm reciprocation of benevolence, as they are incapacitated for any other elevated excellence, by

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perpetual attention to their interest, and unresisting subjection to their passions. Long habits may superinduce inability to deny any desire, or repress, by superior motives, the importunities of any immediate gratification, and an inveterate selfishness will imagine all advantages diminished in proportion as they are communicated.

But not only this hateful and confirmed corruption, but many varieties of disposition, not inconsistent with common degrees of virtue, may exclude friendship from the heart. Some ardent enough in their benevolence, and defective neither in officiousness nor liberality, are mutable and uncertain, soon attracted by new objects, disgusted without offence, and alienated without enmity. Others are soft and flexible, easily influenced by reports or whispers, ready to catch alarms from every dubious circumstance, and to listen to every suspicion which envy and flattery shall suggest, to follow the opinion of every confident adviser, and move by the impulse of the last breath. Some are impatient of contradiction, more willing to go wrong by their own judgment, than to be indebted for a better or a safer way to the sagacity of another, inclined to consider counsel as insult, and inquiry as want of confidence, and to confer their regard on no other terms than unreserved submission, and implicit compliance. Some are dark and involved, equally careful to conceal good and bad purposes; and pleased with producing effects by invisible means, and shewing their design only in its execution. Others are universally communicative, alike open to every eye, and equally pro

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fuse of their own secrets and those of others, without the necessary vigilance of caution, or the honest arts of prudent integrity, ready to accuse without malice, and to betray without treachery. Any of these may be useful to the community, and pass through the world with the reputation of good purposes and uncorrupted morals, but they are unfit for close and tender intimacies. He cannot properly be chosen for a friend, whose kindness is exhaled by its own warmth, or frozen by the first blast of slander; he cannot be a useful counsellor who will hear no opinion but his own; he will not much invite confidence whose principal maxim is to suspect; nor can the candour and frankness of that man be much esteemed, who spreads his arms to humankind, and makes every man, without distinction, a denizen of his bosom.

That friendship may be at once fond and lasting, there must not only be equal virtue on each part, but virtue of the same kind; not only the same end must be proposed, but the same means must be approved by both. We are often, by superficial accomplishments and accidental endearments, induced to love those whom we cannot esteem; we are sometimes, by great abilities, and incontestable evidences of virtue, compelled to esteem those whom we cannot love. But friendship, compounded of esteem and love, derives from one its tenderness, and its permanence from the other; and therefore requires not only that its candidates should gain the judgment, but that they should attract the affections; that they should not only be firm in the day of distress, but gay in the hour of jollity; not only useful in exigencies,

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but pleasing in familiar life; their presence should give cheerfulness as well as courage, and dispel alike the gloom of fear and of melancholy.

To this mutual complacency is generally requisite an uniformity of opinions, at least of those active and conspicuous principles which discriminate parties in government, and sects in religion, and which every day operate more or less on the common business of life. For though great tenderness has, perhaps, been sometimes known to continue between men eminent in contrary factions; yet such friends are to be shewn rather as prodigies than examples, and it is no more proper to regulate our conduct by such instances, than to leap a precipice, because some have fallen from it and escaped with life.

It cannot but be extremely difficult to preserve private kindness in the midst of publick opposition, in which will necessarily be involved a thousand incidents, extending their influence to conversation and privacy. Men engaged, by moral or religious motives, in contrary parties, will generally look with different eyes upon every man, and decide almost every question upon different principles. When such occasions of dispute happen, to comply is to betray our cause, and to maintain friendship by ceasing to deserve it; to be silent is to lose the happiness and dignity of independence, to live in perpetual constraint, and to desert, if not to betray: and who shall determine which of two friends shall yield, where neither believes himself mistaken, and both confess the importance of the question? What then remains but contradiction and debate? and from those

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what can be expected, but acrimony and vehemence, the insolence of triumph, the vexation of defeat, and, in time, a weariness of contest, and an extinction of benevolence? Exchange of endearments and intercourse of civility may continue, indeed, as boughs may for a while be verdant, when the root is wounded; but the poison of discord is infused, and though the countenance may preserve its smile, the heart is hardening and contracting.

That man will not be long agreeable, whom we see only in times of seriousness and severity; and therefore to maintain the softness and serenity of benevolence, it is necessary that friends partake each other's pleasures as well as cares, and be led to the same diversions by similitude of taste. This is, however, not to be considered as equally indispensable with conformity of principles, because any man may honestly, according to the precepts of Horace, resign the gratifications of taste to the humour of another, and friendship may well deserve the sacrifice of pleasure, though not of conscience.

It was once confessed to me, by a painter, that no professor of his art ever loved another. This declaration is so far justified by the knowledge of life, as to damp the hopes of warm and constant friendship, between men whom their studies have made competitors, and whom every favourer and every censurer are hourly inciting against each other. The utmost expectation that experience can warrant, is, that they should forbear open hostilities and secret machinations, and when the whole fraternity is attacked, be able to unite against a common foe.

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Some, however, though few, may perhaps be found, in whom emulation has not been able to overpower generosity, who are distinguished from lower beings by nobler motives than the love of fame, and can preserve the sacred flame of friendship from the gusts of pride, and the rubbish of interest.

Friendship is seldom lasting but between equals, or where the superiority on one side is reduced by some equivalent advantage on the other. Benefits which cannot be repaid, and obligations which cannot be discharged, are not commonly found to increase affection; they excite gratitude indeed, and heighten veneration; but commonly take away that easy freedom and familiarity of intercourse, without which, though there may be fidelity, and zeal, and admiration, there cannot be friendship. Thus imperfect are all earthly blessings; the great effect of friendship is beneficence, yet by the first act of uncommon kindness it is endangered, like plants that bear their fruit and die. Yet this consideration ought not to restrain bounty, or repress compassion; for duty is to be preferred before convenience, and he that loses part of the pleasures of friendship by his generosity, gains in its place the gratulation of his conscience.

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NUMB. 65. TUESDAY, *October* 30, 1750.

——— *Garrit aniles*
Ex re fabellas.——— HOR.

The cheerful sage, when solemn dictates fail,
Conceals the moral counsel in a tale.

OBIDAH, the son of Abensina, left the caravansera early in the morning, and pursued his journey through the plains of Indostan. He was fresh and vigorous with rest; he was animated with hope; he was incited by desire; he walked swiftly forward over the valleys, and saw the hills gradually rising before him. As he passed along, his ears were delighted with the morning song of the bird of paradise, he was fanned by the last flutters of the sinking breeze, and sprinkled with dew by groves of spices; he sometimes contemplated the towering height of the oak, monarch of the hills; and sometimes caught the gentle fragrance of the primrose, eldest daughter of the spring: all his senses were gratified, and all care was banished from his heart.

Thus he went on till the sun approached his meridian, and the increasing heat preyed upon his strength; he then looked round about him for some more commodious path. He saw, on his right hand, a grove that seemed to wave its shades as a sign of invitation; he entered it, and found the

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coolness and verdure irresistibly pleasant. He did not, however, forget whither he was travelling, but found a narrow way bordered with flowers, which appeared to have the same direction with the main road, and was pleased that, by this happy experiment, he had found means to unite pleasure with business, and to gain the rewards of diligence without suffering its fatigues. He, therefore, still continued to walk for a time, without the least remission of his ardour, except that he was sometimes tempted to stop by the musick of the birds whom the heat had assembled in the shade; and sometimes amused himself with plucking the flowers that covered the banks on either side, or the fruits that hung upon the branches. At last the green path began to decline from its first tendency, and to wind among hills and thickets, cooled with fountains and murmuring with waterfalls. Here Obidah paused for a time, and began to consider whether it were longer safe to forsake the known and common track; but remembering that the heat was now in its greatest violence, and that the plain was dusty and uneven, he resolved to pursue the new path, which he supposed only to make a few meanders, in compliance with the varieties of the ground, and to end at last in the common road.

Having thus calmed his solicitude, he renewed his pace, though he suspected that he was not gaining ground. This uneasiness of his mind inclined him to lay hold on every new object, and give way to every sensation that might sooth or divert him. He listened to every echo, he mounted every hill for a

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fresh prospect, he turned aside to every cascade, and pleased himself with tracing the course of a gentle river that rolled among the trees, and watered a large region with innumerable circumvolutions. In these amusements the hours passed away uncounted, his deviations had perplexed his memory, and he knew not towards what point to travel. He stood pensive and confused, afraid to go forward lest he should go wrong, yet conscious that the time of loitering was now past. While he was thus tortured with uncertainty, the sky was overspread with clouds, the day vanished from before him, and a sudden tempest gathered round his head. He was now roused by his danger to a quick and painful remembrance of his folly; he now saw how happiness is lost when ease is consulted; he lamented the unmanly impatience that prompted him to seek shelter in the grove, and despised the petty curiosity that led him on from trifle to trifle. While he was thus reflecting, the air grew blacker, and a clap of thunder broke his meditation.

He now resolved to do what remained yet in his power, to tread back the ground which he had passed, and try to find some issue where the wood might open into the plain. He prostrated himself on the ground, and commended his life to the Lord of nature. He rose with confidence and tranquillity, and pressed on with his sabre in his hand, for the beasts of the desert were in motion, and on every hand were heard the mingled howls of rage and fear, and ravage and expiration; all the horrours of darkness and solitude surrounded him: the winds roared

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in the woods, and the torrents tumbled from the hills,

——— χείμαῤῥοι ποταμοὶ κατ' ὄρεσφι ῥέοντες
Ἐς μισγαγκειαν συμβάλλετον ὄβριμον ὕδωρ,
Τόνδε τε τηλόσε δοῦπον ἐν οὔρεσιν ἔκλυε ποιμήν.

Work'd into sudden rage by wintry show'rs,
Down the steep hill the roaring torrent pours;
The mountain shepherd hears the distant noise.

Thus forlorn and distressed, he wandered through the wild, without knowing whither he was going, or whether he was every moment drawing nearer to safety or to destruction. At length not fear but labour began to overcome him; his breath grew short, and his knees trembled, he was on the point of lying down in resignation to his fate, when he beheld through the brambles the glimmer of a taper. He advanced towards the light, and finding that it proceeded from the cottage of a hermit, he called humbly at the door, and obtained admission. The old man set before him such provisions as he had collected for himself, on which Obidah fed with eagerness and gratitude.

When the repast was over, "Tell me," said the hermit, "by what chance thou hast been brought hither; I have been now twenty years an inhabitant of the wilderness, in which I never saw a man before." Obidah then related the occurrences of his journey, without any concealment or palliation.

"Son," said the hermit, "let the errours and follies, the dangers and escape of this day, sink deep into thy heart. Remember, my son, that human

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life is the journey of a day. We rise in the morning of youth, full of vigour and full of expectation; we set forward with spirit and hope, with gaiety and with diligence, and travel on a while in the straight road of piety towards the mansions of rest. In a short time we remit our fervour, and endeavour to find some mitigation of our duty, and some more easy means of obtaining the same end. We then relax our vigour, and resolve no longer to be terrified with crimes at a distance, but rely upon our own constancy, and venture to approach what we resolve never to touch. We thus enter the bowers of ease, and repose in the shades of security. Here the heart softens and vigilance subsides; we are then willing to inquire whether another advance cannot be made, and whether we may not, at least, turn our eyes upon the gardens of pleasure. We approach them with scruple and hesitation; we enter them, but enter timorous and trembling, and always hope to pass through them without losing the road of virtue, which we, for a while, keep in our sight, and to which we propose to return. But temptation succeeds temptation, and one compliance prepares us for another; we in time lose the happiness of innocence, and solace our disquiet with sensual gratifications. By degrees we let fall the remembrance of our original intention, and quit the only adequate object of rational desire. We entangle ourselves in business, immerge ourselves in luxury, and rove through the labyrinths of inconstancy, till the darkness of old age begins to invade us, and disease and anxiety obstruct our way. We

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then look back upon our lives with horrour, with sorrow, with repentance; and wish, but too often vainly wish, that we had not forsaken the ways of virtue. Happy are they, my son, who shall learn from thy example not to despair, but shall remember, that though the day is past, and their strength is wasted, there yet remains one effort to be made; that reformation is never hopeless, nor sincere endeavours ever unassisted; that the wanderer may at length return after all his errours, and that he who implores strength and courage from above, shall find danger and difficulty give way before him. Go now, my son, to thy repose, commit thyself to the care of Omnipotence, and when the morning calls again to toil, begin anew thy journey and thy life."

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NUMB. 66. SATURDAY, *November* 3, 1750.

Pauci dignoscere possunt
Vera bona, atque illis multum diversa, remotâ
Erroris nebula. JUV.

——— How few
Know their own good; or, knowing it, pursue!
How void of reason are our hopes and fears! DRYDEN.

THE folly of human wishes and pursuits has always been a standing subject of mirth and declamation, and has been ridiculed and lamented from age to age; till perhaps the fruitless repetition of complaints and censures, may be justly numbered among the subjects of censure and complaint.

Some of these instructors of mankind have not contented themselves with checking the overflows of passion, and lopping the exuberance of desire, but have attempted to destroy the root as well as the branches; and not only to confine the mind within bounds, but to smooth it for ever by a dead calm. They have employed their reason and eloquence to persuade us, that nothing is worth the wish of a wise man, have represented all earthly good and evil as indifferent, and counted among vulgar errours the dread of pain, and the love of life.

It is almost always the unhappiness of a victorious disputant, to destroy his own authority by claiming too many consequences, or diffusing his

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proposition to an indefensible extent. When we have heated our zeal in a cause, and elated our confidence with success, we are naturally inclined to pursue the same train of reasoning, to establish some collateral truth, to remove some adjacent difficulty, and to take in the whole comprehension of our system. As a prince, in the ardour of acquisition, is willing to secure his first conquest by the addition of another, add fortress to fortress, and city to city, till despair and opportunity turn his enemies upon him, and he loses in a moment the glory of a reign.

The philosophers having found an easy victory over those desires which we produce in ourselves, and which terminate in some imaginary state of happiness unknown and unattainable, proceeded to make further inroads upon the heart, and attacked at last our senses and our instincts. They continued to war upon nature with arms, by which only folly could be conquered; they therefore lost the trophies of their former combats, and were considered no longer with reverence or regard.

Yet it cannot be with justice denied, that these men have been very useful monitors, and have left many proofs of strong reason, deep penetration, and accurate attention to the affairs of life, which it is now our business to separate from the foam of a boiling imagination, and to apply judiciously to our own use. They have shewn that most of the conditions of life, which raise the envy of the timorous, and rouse the ambition of the daring, are empty shows of felicity, which, when they become familiar, lose their power of delighting; and that the most

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prosperous and exalted have very few advantages over a meaner and more obscure fortune, when their dangers and solicitudes are balanced against their equipage, their banquets, and their palaces.

It is natural for every man uninstructed to murmur at his condition, because, in the general infelicity of life, he feels his own miseries, without knowing that they are common to all the rest of the species; and therefore, though he will not be less sensible of pain by being told that others are equally tormented, he will at least be freed from the temptation of seeking, by perpetual changes, that ease which is no where to be found; and though his disease still continues, he escapes the hazard of exasperating it by remedies.

The gratifications which affluence of wealth, extent of power, and eminence of reputation confer, must be always, by their own nature, confined to a very small number; and the life of the greater part of mankind must be lost in empty wishes and painful comparisons, were not the balm of philosophy shed upon us, and our discontent at the appearances of an unequal distribution soothed and appeased.

It seemed, perhaps, below the dignity of the great masters of moral learning, to descend to familiar life, and caution mankind against that petty ambition which is known among us by the name of Vanity; which yet had been an undertaking not unworthy of the longest beard, and most solemn austerity. For though the passions of little minds, acting in low stations, do not fill the world with bloodshed and

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devastations, or mark, by great events, the periods of time, yet they torture the breast on which they seize, infest those that are placed within the reach of their influence, destroy private quiet and private virtue, and undermine insensibly the happiness of the world.

The desire of excellence is laudable, but is very frequently ill directed. We fall, by chance, into some class of mankind, and, without consulting nature or wisdom, resolve to gain their regard by those qualities which they happen to esteem. I once knew a man remarkably dim-sighted, who, by conversing much with country gentlemen, found himself irresistibly determined to sylvan honours. His great ambition was to shoot flying, and he therefore spent whole days in the woods pursuing game; which, before he was near enough to see them, his approach frighted away.

When it happens that the desire tends to objects which produce no competition, it may be overlooked with some indulgence, because, however fruitless or absurd, it cannot have ill effects upon the morals. But most of our enjoyments owe their value to the peculiarity of possession, and when they are rated at too high a value, give occasion to stratagems of malignity, and incite opposition, hatred, and defamation. The contest of two rural beauties for preference and distinction, is often sufficiently keen and rancorous to fill their breasts with all those passions, which are generally thought the curse only of senates, of armies, and of courts; and the rival dancers of an obscure assembly have their partisans and abet-

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tors, often not less exasperated against each other, than those who are promoting the interests of rival monarchs.

It is common to consider those whom we find infected with an unreasonable regard for trifling accomplishments, as chargeable with all the consequences of their folly, and as the authors of their own unhappiness: but, perhaps, those whom we thus scorn or detest, have more claim to tenderness than has been yet allowed them. Before we permit our severity to break loose upon any fault or errour, we ought surely to consider how much we have countenanced or promoted it. We see multitudes busy in the pursuit of riches, at the expense of wisdom and of virtue; but we see the rest of mankind approving their conduct, and inciting their eagerness, by paying that regard and deference to wealth, which wisdom and virtue only can deserve. We see women universally jealous of the reputation of their beauty, and frequently look with contempt on the care with which they study their complexions, endeavour to preserve or to supply the bloom of youth, regulate every ornament, twist their hair into curls, and shade their faces from the weather. We recommend the care of their nobler part, and tell them how little addition is made by all their arts to the graces of the mind. But when was it known that female goodness or knowledge was able to attract that officiousness, or inspire that ardour, which beauty produces whenever it appears? And with what hope can we endeavour to persuade the ladies, that the time spent at the toilet is lost in vanity,

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when they have every moment some new conviction, that their interest is more effectually promoted by a riband well disposed, than by the brightest act of heroick virtue?

In every instance of vanity it will be found that the blame ought to be shared among more than it generally reaches; all who exalt trifles by immoderate praise, or instigate needless emulation by invidious incitements, are to be considered as perverters of reason, and corrupters of the world: and since every man is obliged to promote happiness and virtue, he should be careful not to mislead unwary minds, by appearing to set too high a value upon things by which no real excellence is conferred.

NUMB. 67. TUESDAY, *November* 6, 1750.

Αἱ δ' ἐλπίδες βόσκουσι φυγάδας, ὡς λόγος,
Καλῶς βλέπουσιν ὄμμασι, μέλλουσι δέ. EURIP.

Exiles, the proverb says, subsist on hope,
Delusive hope still points to distant good,
To good that mocks approach.

THERE is no temper so generally indulged as hope: other passions operate by starts on particular occasions, or in certain parts of life; but hope begins with the first power of comparing our actual with our possible state, and attends us through every stage and period, always urging us forward to new acquisitions, and holding out some distant blessing

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to our view, promising us either relief from pain, or increase of happiness.

Hope is necessary in every condition. The miseries of poverty, of sickness, of captivity, would, without this comfort, be insupportable; nor does it appear that the happiest lot of terrestrial existence can set us above the want of this general blessing; or that life, when the gifts of nature and of fortune are accumulated upon it, would not still be wretched, were it not elevated and delighted by the expectation of some new possession, of some enjoyment yet behind, by which the wish shall be at last satisfied, and the heart filled up to its utmost extent.

Hope, is indeed, very fallacious, and promises what it seldom gives; but its promises are more valuable than the gifts of fortune, and it seldom frustrates us without assuring us of recompensing the delay by a greater bounty.

I was musing on this strange inclination which every man feels to deceive himself, and considering the advantages and dangers proceeding from this gay prospect of futurity, when, falling asleep, on a sudden I found myself placed in a garden, of which my sight could descry no limits. Every scene about me was gay and gladsome, light with sunshine, and fragrant with perfumes; the ground was painted with all the variety of spring, and all the choir of nature was singing in the groves. When I had recovered from the first raptures, with which the confusion of pleasure had for a time entranced me, I began to take a particular and deliberate view of this delightful region. I

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then perceived that I had yet higher gratifications to expect, and that, at a small distance from me, there were brighter flowers, clearer fountains, and more lofty groves, where the birds, which I yet heard but faintly, were exerting all the power of melody. The trees about me were beautiful with verdure, and fragrant with blossoms; but I was tempted to leave them by the sight of ripe fruits, which seemed to hang only to be plucked. I therefore walked hastily forwards, but found, as I proceeded, that the colours of the field faded at my approach, the fruit fell before I reached it, the birds flew still singing before me, and though I pressed onward with great celerity, I was still in sight of pleasures of which I could not yet gain the possession, and which seemed to mock my diligence, and to retire as I advanced.

Though I was confounded with so many alternations of joy and grief, I yet persisted to go forward, in hopes that these fugitive delights would in time be overtaken. At length I saw an innumerable multitude of every age and sex, who seemed all to partake of some general felicity; for every cheek was flushed with confidence, and every eye sparkled with eagerness: yet each appeared to have some particular and secret pleasure, and very few were willing to communicate their intentions, or extend their concern beyond themselves. Most of them seemed, by the rapidity of their motion, too busy to gratify the curiosity of a stranger, and therefore I was content for a while to gaze upon them, without interrupting them with troublesome inquiries. At last

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I observed one man worn with time, and unable to struggle in the crowd; and, therefore, supposing him more at leisure, I began to accost him: but he turned from me with anger, and told me he must not be disturbed, for the great hour of projection was now come when Mercury should lose his wings, and slavery should no longer dig the mine for gold.

I left him, and attempted another, whose softness of mien, and easy movement, gave me reason to hope for a more agreeable reception: but he told me, with a low bow, that nothing would make him more happy than an opportunity of serving me, which he could not now want, for a place which he had been twenty years soliciting would be soon vacant. From him I had recourse to the next, who was departing in haste to take possession of the estate of an uncle, who by the course of nature could not live long. He that followed was preparing to dive for treasure in a new-invented bell; and another was on the point of discovering the longitude.

Being thus rejected wheresoever I applied myself for information, I began to imagine it best to desist from inquiry, and try what my own observation would discover: but seeing a young man, gay and thoughtless, I resolved upon one more experiment, and was informed that I was in the garden of HOPE, the daughter of DESIRE, and that all those whom I saw thus tumultuously bustling round me were incited by the promises of HOPE, and hastening to seize the gifts which she held in her hand.

I turned my sight upward, and saw a goddess in the bloom of youth sitting on a throne: around

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her lay all the gifts of fortune, and all the blessings of life were spread abroad to view; she had a perpetual gaiety of aspect, and every one imagined that her smile, which was impartial and general, was directed to himself, and triumphed in his own superiority to others, who had conceived the same confidence from the same mistake.

I then mounted an eminence, from which I had a more extensive view of the whole place, and could with less perplexity consider the different conduct of the crowds that filled it. From this station I observed, that the entrance into the garden of HOPE was by two gates, one of which was kept by REASON, and the other by FANCY. REASON was surly and scrupulous, and seldom turned the key without many interrogatories, and long hesitation; but FANCY was a kind and gentle portress, she held her gate wide open, and welcomed all equally to the district under her superintendency; so that the passage was crowded by all those who either feared the examination of REASON, or had been rejected by her.

From the gate of REASON there was a way to the throne of HOPE, by a craggy, slippery and winding path, called the *Streight of Difficulty*, which those who entered with the permission of the guard endeavoured to climb. But though they surveyed the way very carefully before they began to rise, and marked out the several stages of their progress, they commonly found unexpected obstacles, and were obliged frequently to stop on the sudden, where they imagined the way plain and even. A thousand intricacies embarrassed them, a thousand

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slips threw them back, and a thousand pitfalls impeded their advance. So formidable were the dangers, and so frequent the miscarriages, that many returned from the first attempt, and many fainted in the midst of the way, and only a very small number were led up to the summit of HOPE, by the hand of FORTITUDE. Of these few the greater part, when they had obtained the gift which HOPE had promised them, regretted the labour which it cost, and felt in their success the regret of disappointment; the rest retired with their prize, and were led by WISDOM to the bowers of CONTENT.

Turning then towards the gate of FANCY, I could find no way to the seat of HOPE; but though she sat full in view, and held out her gifts with an air of invitation, which filled every heart with rapture, the mountain was, on that side, inaccessibly steep, but so channelled and shaded, that none perceived the impossibility of ascending it, but each imagined himself to have discovered a way to which the rest were strangers. Many expedients were indeed tried by this industrious tribe, of whom some were making themselves wings, which others were contriving to actuate by the perpetual motion. But with all their labour, and all their artifices, they never rose above the ground, or quickly fell back, nor ever approached the throne of HOPE, but continued still to gaze at a distance, and laughed at the slow progress of those whom they saw toiling in the *Streight of Difficulty*.

Part of the favourites of FANCY, when they had entered the garden, without making, like the rest, an attempt to climb the mountain, turned immediately to the vale of IDLENESS, a calm and undis-

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turbed retirement, from whence they could always have HOPE in prospect, and to which they pleased themselves with believing that she intended speedily to descend. These were indeed scorned by all the rest; but they seemed very little affected by contempt, advice, or reproof, but were resolved to expect at ease the favour of the goddess.

Among this gay race I was wandering, and found them ready to answer all my questions, and willing to communicate their mirth; but turning round, I saw two dreadful monsters entering the vale, one of whom I knew to be AGE, and the other WANT. Sport and revelling were now at an end, and an universal shriek of affright and distress burst out and awaked me.

NUMB. 68. SATURDAY, *November* 10, 1750.

Vivendum rectè, cum propter plurima, tunc his
Præcipue causis, ut linguas mancipiorum
Contemnas; nam lingua mali pars pessima servi. JUV.

Let us live well: were it alone for this
The baneful tongues of servants to despise:
Slander, that worst of poisons, ever finds
An easy entrance to ignoble minds. HERVEY.

THE younger Pliny has very justly observed, that of actions that deserve our attention, the most splendid are not always the greatest. Fame, and wonder, and applause, are not excited but by external and adventitious circumstances, often distinct and sepa-

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rate from virtue and heroism. Eminence of station, greatness of effect, and all the favours of fortune, must concur to place excellence in publick view; but fortitude, diligence, and patience, divested of their show, glide unobserved through the crowd of life, and suffer and act, though with the same vigour and constancy, yet without pity and without praise.

This remark may be extended to all parts of life. Nothing is to be estimated by its effect upon common eyes and common ears. A thousand miseries make silent and invisible inroads on mankind, and the heart feels innumerable throbs, which never break into complaint. Perhaps, likewise, our pleasures are for the most part equally secret, and most are borne up by some private satisfaction, some internal consciousness, some latent hope, some peculiar prospect, which they never communicate, but reserve for solitary hours, and clandestine meditation.

The main of life is, indeed, composed of small incidents and petty occurrences; of wishes for objects not remote, and grief for disappointments of no fatal consequence; of insect vexations which sting us and fly away, impertinences which buzz awhile about us, and are heard no more; of meteorous pleasures which dance before us and are dissipated; of compliments which glide off the soul like other musick, and are forgotten by him that gave, and him that received them.

Such is the general heap out of which every man is to cull his own condition: for, as the chemists tell us, that all bodies are resolvable into the

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same elements, and that the boundless variety of things arises from the different proportions of very few ingredients; so a few pains and a few pleasures are all the materials of human life, and of these the proportions are partly allotted by Providence, and partly left to the arrangement of reason and of choice.

As these are well or ill disposed, man is for the most part happy or miserable. For very few are involved in great events, or have their thread of life entwisted with the chain of causes on which armies or nations are suspended; and even those who seem wholly busied in publick affairs, and elevated above low cares, or trivial pleasures, pass the chief part of their time in familiar and domestick scenes; from these they came into publick life, to these they are every hour recalled by passions not to be suppressed; in these they have the reward of their toils, and to these at last they retire.

The great end of prudence is to give cheerfulness to those hours, which splendour cannot gild, and acclamation cannot exhilarate; those soft intervals of unbended amusement, in which a man shrinks to his natural dimensions, and throws aside the ornaments or disguises, which he feels in privacy to be useless incumbrances, and to lose all effect when they become familiar. To be happy at home is the ultimate result of all ambition, the end to which every enterprise and labour tends, and of which every desire prompts the prosecution.

It is, indeed, at home that every man must be known by those who would make a just estimate

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either of his virtue or felicity; for smiles and embroidery are alike occasional, and the mind is often dressed for show in painted honour and fictitious benevolence.

Every man must have found some whose lives, in every house but their own, was a continual series of hypocrisy, and who concealed under fair appearances bad qualities, which, whenever they thought themselves out of the reach of censure, broke out from their restraint, like winds imprisoned in their caverns, and whom every one had reason to love, but they whose love a wise man is chiefly solicitous to procure. And there are others who, without any show of general goodness, and without the attractions by which popularity is conciliated, are received among their own families as bestowers of happiness, and reverenced as instructors, guardians, and benefactors.

The most authentick witnesses of any man's character are those who know him in his own family, and see him without any restraint or rule of conduct, but such as he voluntarily prescribes to himself. If a man carries virtue with him into his private apartments, and takes no advantage of unlimited power or probable secrecy; if we trace him through the round of his time, and find that his character, with those allowances which mortal frailty must always want, is uniform and regular, we have all the evidence of his sincerity that one man can have with regard to another: and, indeed, as hypocrisy cannot be its own reward, we may, without hesitation, determine that his heart is pure.

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The highest panegyrick, therefore, that private virtue can receive, is the praise of servants. For, however vanity or insolence may look down with contempt on the suffrage of men undignified by wealth, and unenlightened by education, it very seldom happens that they commend or blame without justice. Vice and virtue are easily distinguished. Oppression, according to Harrington's aphorism, will be felt by those that cannot see it; and, perhaps, it falls out very often that, in moral questions, the philosophers in the gown, and in the livery, differ not so much in their sentiments, as in their language, and have equal power of discerning right, though they cannot point it out to others with equal address.

There are very few faults to be committed in solitude, or without some agents, partners, confederates, or witnesses; and, therefore, the servant must commonly know the secrets of a master, who has any secrets to entrust; and failings, merely personal, are so frequently exposed by that security which pride and folly generally produce, and so inquisitively watched by that desire of reducing the inequalities of condition, which the lower orders of the world will always feel, that the testimony of a menial domestick can seldom be considered as defective for want of knowledge. And though its impartiality may be sometimes suspected, it is at least as credible as that of equals, where rivalry instigates censure, or friendship dictates palliations.

The danger of betraying our weakness to our servants, and the impossibility of concealing it from them, may be justly considered as one motive to a

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regular and irreproachable life. For no condition is more hateful or despicable, than his who has put himself in the power of his servant; in the power of him whom, perhaps, he has first corrupted by making him subservient to his vices, and whose fidelity he therefore cannot enforce by any precepts of honesty or reason. It is seldom known that authority thus acquired, is possessed without insolence, or that the master is not forced to confess by his tameness or forbearance, that he has enslaved himself by some foolish confidence. And his crime is equally punished, whatever part he takes of the choice to which he is reduced; and he is from that fatal hour, in which he sacrificed his dignity to his passions, in perpetual dread of insolence or defamation; of a controuler at home, or an accuser abroad. He is condemned to purchase, by continual bribes, that secrecy which bribes never secured, and which, after a long course of submission, promises, and anxieties, he will find violated in a fit of rage, or in a frolick of drunkenness.

To dread no eye, and to suspect no tongue, is the great prerogative of innocence; an exemption granted only to invariable virtue. But, guilt has always its horrours and solicitudes; and to make it yet more shameful and detestable, it is doomed often to stand in awe of those, to whom nothing could give influence or weight, but their power of betraying.

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NUMB. 69. TUESDAY, *November* 13, 1750.

Flet quoque, ut in speculo rugas adspexit aniles,
Tyndaris; et secum, cur sit bis rapta, requirit.
Tempus edax rerum, tuque invidiosa vetustas
Omnia destruitis: vitiataque dentibus ævi
Paulatim lentâ consumitis omnia morte. OVID.

The dreadful wrinkles when poor Helen spy'd,
Ah! why this second rape? with tears she cry'd,
Time, thou devourer, and thou envious age,
Who all destroy with keen corroding rage,
Beneath your jaws, whate'er have pleas'd or please,
Must sink, consum'd by swift or slow degrees.
ELPHINSTON.

AN old Greek epigrammatist, intending to shew the miseries that attend the last stage of man, imprecates upon those who are so foolish as to wish for long life, the calamity of continuing to grow old from century to century. He thought that no adventitious or foreign pain was requisite; that decrepitude itself was an epitome of whatever is dreadful; and nothing could be added to the curse of age, but that it should be extended beyond its natural limits.

The most indifferent or negligent spectator can indeed scarcely retire without heaviness of heart, from a view of the last scenes of the tragedy of life, in which he finds those who, in the former parts of the drama, were distinguished by opposition of conduct, contrariety of designs, and dissimilitude of

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personal qualities, all involved in one common distress, and all struggling with affliction which they cannot hope to overcome.

The other miseries, which waylay our passage through the world, wisdom may escape, and fortitude may conquer: by caution and circumspection we may steal along with very little to obstruct or incommode us; by spirit and vigour we may force a way, and reward the vexation of contest by the pleasures of victory. But a time must come when our policy and bravery shall be equally useless; when we shall all sink into helplessness and sadness, without any power of receiving solace from the pleasures that have formerly delighted us, or any prospect of emerging into a second possession of the blessings that we have lost.

The industry of man has, indeed, not been wanting in endeavours to procure comforts for these hours of dejection and melancholy, and to gild the dreadful gloom with artificial light. The most usual support of old age is wealth. He whose possessions are large, and whose chests are full, imagines himself always fortified against invasions on his authority. If he has lost all other means of government, if his strength and his reason fail him, he can at last alter his will; and therefore all that have hopes must likewise have fears, and he may still continue to give laws to such as have not ceased to regard their own interest.

This is, indeed, too frequently the citadel of the dotard, the last fortress to which age retires, and in which he makes the stand against the upstart

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race that seizes his domains, disputes his commands, and cancels his prescriptions. But here, though there may be safety, there is no pleasure; and what remains is but a proof that more was once possessed.

Nothing seems to have been more universally dreaded by the ancients than orbity, or want of children; and, indeed, to a man who has survived all the companions of his youth, all who have participated his pleasures and his cares, have been engaged in the same events, and filled their minds with the same conceptions, this full-peopled world is a dismal solitude. He stands forlorn and silent, neglected or insulted, in the midst of multitudes, animated with hopes which he cannot share, and employed in business which he is no longer able to forward or retard; nor can he find any to whom his life or his death are of importance, unless he has secured some domestick gratifications, some tender employments, and endeared himself to some whose interest and gratitude may unite them to him.

So different are the colours of life as we look forward to the future, or backward to the past; and so different the opinions and sentiments which this contrariety of appearance naturally produces, that the conversation of the old and young ends generally with contempt or pity on either side. To a young man entering the world with fulness of hope, and ardour of pursuit, nothing is so unpleasing as the cold caution, the faint expectations, the scrupulous diffidence, which experience and disappointments certainly infuse; and the old man

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wonders in his turn that the world never can grow wiser, that neither precepts, nor testimonies, can cure boys of their credulity and sufficiency; and that not one can be convinced that snares are laid for him, till he finds himself entangled.

Thus one generation is always the scorn and wonder of the other, and the notions of the old and young are like liquors of different gravity and texture which never can unite. The spirits of youth sublimed by health, and volatilized by passion, soon leave behind them the phlegmatick sediment of weariness and deliberation, and burst out in temerity and enterprise. The tenderness therefore which nature infuses, and which long habits of beneficence confirm, is necessary to reconcile such opposition; and an old man must be a father to bear with patience those follies and absurdities which he will perpetually imagine himself to find in the schemes and expectations, the pleasures and the sorrows, of those who have not yet been hardened by time, and chilled by frustration.

Yet it may be doubted, whether the pleasure of seeing children ripening into strength, be not overbalanced by the pain of seeing some fall in the blossom, and others blasted in their growth; some shaken down with storms, some tainted with cankers, and some shrivelled in the shade; and whether he that extends his care beyond himself, does not multiply his anxieties more than his pleasures, and weary himself to no purpose, by superintending what he cannot regulate.

But, though age be to every order of human

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beings sufficiently terrible, it is particularly to be dreaded by fine ladies, who have had no other end or ambition than to fill up the day and the night with dress, diversions, and flattery, and who, having made no acquaintance with knowledge, or with business, have constantly caught all their ideas from the current prattle of the hour, and been indebted for all their happiness to compliments and treats. With these ladies, age begins early, and very often lasts long; it begins when their beauty fades, when their mirth loses its sprightliness, and their motion its ease. From that time all which gave them joy vanishes from about them; they hear the praises bestowed on others, which used to swell their bosoms with exultation. They visit the seats of felicity, and endeavour to continue the habit of being delighted. But pleasure is only received when we believe that we give it in return. Neglect and petulance inform them that their power and their value are past; and what then remains but a tedious and comfortless uniformity of time, without any motion of the heart, or exercise of the reason?

Yet, however age may discourage us by its appearance from considering it in prospect, we shall all by degrees certainly be old; and therefore we ought to inquire what provision can be made against that time of distress? what happiness can be stored up against the winter of life? and how we may pass our latter years with serenity and cheerfulness?

If it has been found by the experience of mankind, that not even the best seasons of life are able to supply sufficient gratifications, without anticipa-

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ting uncertain felicities, it cannot surely be supposed that old age, worn with labours, harassed with anxieties, and tortured with diseases, should have any gladness of its own, or feel any satisfaction from the contemplation of the present. All the comfort that can now be expected must be recalled from the past, or borrowed from the future; the past is very soon exhausted, all the events or actions of which the memory can afford pleasure are quickly recollected; and the future lies beyond the grave, where it can be reached only by virtue and devotion.

Piety is the only proper and adequate relief of decaying man. He that grows old without religious hopes, as he declines into imbecility, and feels pains and sorrows incessantly crowding upon him, falls into a gulph of bottomless misery, in which every reflection must plunge him deeper, and where he finds only new gradations of anguish, and precipices of horrour.

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NUMB. 70. SATURDAY, *November* 17, 1750.

——— *Argentea proles,*
Auro deterior, fulvo pretiosior ære. OVID.

Succeeding times a silver age behold,
Excelling brass, but more excell'd by gold. DRYDEN.

HESIOD, in his celebrated distribution of mankind, divides them into three orders of intellect. "The first place," says he, "belongs to him that can by his own powers discern what is right and fit, and penetrate to the remoter motives of action. The second is claimed by him that is willing to hear instruction, and can perceive right and wrong when they are shewn him by another; but he that has neither acuteness nor docility, who can neither find the way by himself, nor will be led by others, is a wretch without use or value."

If we survey the moral world, it will be found, that the same division may be made of men, with regard to their virtue. There are some whose principles are so firmly fixed, whose conviction is so constantly present to their minds, and who have raised in themselves such ardent wishes for the approbation of God, and the happiness with which he has promised to reward obedience and perseverance, that they rise above all other cares and considerations, and uniformly examine every action and

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desire, by comparing it with the divine commands. There are others in a kind of equipoise between good and ill; who are moved on the one part by riches or pleasure, by the gratifications of passion and the delights of sense; and, on the other, by laws of which they own the obligation, and rewards of which they believe the reality, and whom a very small addition of weight turns either way. The third class consists of beings immersed in pleasure, or abandoned to passion, without any desire of higher good, or any effort to extend their thoughts beyond immediate and gross satisfactions.

The second class is so much the most numerous, that it may be considered as comprising the whole body of mankind. Those of the last are not very many, and those of the first are very few; and neither the one nor the other fall much under the consideration of the moralists, whose precepts are intended chiefly for those who are endeavouring to go forward up the steeps of virtue, not for those who have already reached the summit, or those who are resolved to stay for ever in their present situation.

To a man not versed in the living world, but accustomed to judge only by speculative reason, it is scarcely credible that any one should be in this state of indifference, or stand undetermined and unengaged, ready to follow the first call to either side. It seems certain, that either a man must believe that virtue will make him happy, and resolve therefore to be virtuous, or think that he may be happy without virtue, and therefore cast off all care but for his present interest. It

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seems impossible that conviction should be on one side, and practice on the other; and that he who has seen the right way should voluntarily shut his eyes, that he may quit it with more tranquillity. Yet all these absurdities are every hour to be found; the wisest and best men deviate from known and acknowledged duties, by inadvertency or surprise; and most are good no longer than while temptation is away, than while their passions are without excitements, and their opinions are free from the counteraction of any other motive.

Among the sentiments which almost every man changes as he advances into years, is the expectation of uniformity of character. He that without acquaintance with the power of desire, the cogency of distress, the complications of affairs, or the force of partial influence, has filled his mind with the excellence of virtue, and, having never tried his resolution in any encounters with hope or fear, believes it able to stand firm whatever shall oppose it, will be always clamorous against the smallest failure, ready to exact the utmost punctualities of right, and to consider every man that fails in any part of his duty, as without conscience and without merit; unworthy of trust or love, of pity or regard; as an enemy whom all should join to drive out of society, as a pest which all should avoid, or as a weed which all should trample.

It is not but by experience, that we are taught the possibility of retaining some virtues, and rejecting others, or of being good or bad to a particular degree. For it is very easy to the solitary reasoner, to prove that the same arguments by which the mind is fortified

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against one crime are of equal force against all, and the consequence very naturally follows, that he whom they fail to move on any occasion, has either never considered them, or has by some fallacy taught himself to evade their validity; and that, therefore, when a man is known to be guilty of one crime, no farther evidence is needful of his depravity and corruption.

Yet such is the state of all mortal virtue, that it is always uncertain and variable, sometimes extending to the whole compass of duty, and sometimes shrinking into a narrow space, and fortifying only a few avenues of the heart, while all the rest is left open to the incursions of appetite, or given up to the dominion of wickedness. Nothing therefore is more unjust than to judge of man by too short an acquaintance, and too slight inspection; for it often happens, that in the loose, and thoughtless, and dissipated, there is a secret radical worth, which may shoot out by proper cultivation; that the spark of heaven, though dimmed and obstructed, is yet not extinguished, but may, by the breath of counsel and exhortation, be kindled into flame.

To imagine that every one who is not completely good is irrecoverably abandoned, is to suppose that all are capable of the same degree of excellence; it is indeed to exact from all that perfection which none ever can attain. And since the purest virtue is consistent with some vice, and the virtue of the greatest number with almost an equal proportion of contrary qualities, let none too hastily conclude, that all goodness is lost, though

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it may for a time be clouded and overwhelmed; for most minds are the slaves of external circumstances, and conform to any hand that undertakes to mould them, roll down any torrent of custom in which they happen to be caught, or bend to any importunity that bears hard against them.

It may be particularly observed of women, that they are for the most part good or bad, as they fall among those who practise vice or virtue; and that neither education nor reason gives them much security against the influence of example. Whether it be that they have less courage to stand against opposition, or that their desire of admiration makes them sacrifice their principles to the poor pleasure of worthless praise, it is certain, whatever be the cause, that female goodness seldom keeps its ground against laughter, flattery, or fashion.

For this reason, every one should consider himself as entrusted, not only with his own conduct, but with that of others; and as accountable, not only for the duties which he neglects, or the crimes that he commits, but for that negligence and irregularity which he may encourage or inculcate. Every man, in whatever station, has, or endeavours to have, his followers, admirers, and imitators, and has therefore the influence of his example to watch with care; he ought to avoid not only crimes, but the appearance of crimes, and not only to practise virtue, but to applaud, countenance, and support it. For it is possible that for want of attention, we may teach others faults from which ourselves are free,

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or, by a cowardly desertion of a cause which we ourselves approve, may pervert those who fix their eyes upon us, and having no rule of their own to guide their course, are easily misled by the aberrations of that example which they choose for their direction.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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